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PUBLIC PAPERS OF THE PRESIDENTS OF THE UNITED STATES

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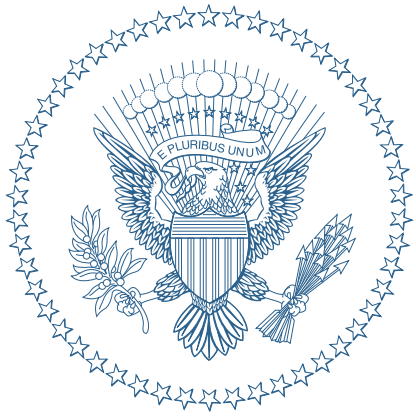
OF THE
UNITED STATES

Barack Obama



2016–2017

(IN TWO BOOKS)

BOOK II—JULY 1, 2016 TO JANUARY 20, 2017

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Foreword

When I took Office 8 years ago, our Nation was in the midst of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. 44 million Americans were without health insurance, our auto industry was on the brink of collapse, and almost 180,000 of our men and women in uniform were serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Nearly 800,000 Americans were losing their jobs each month, and our reputation abroad was on the decline. On so many of the challenges we faced, we had been kicking the can down the road for far too long.

Today, our country is stronger and more prosperous than many ever thought possible, and in reflecting on all we've achieved over the course of my Presidency, I couldn't be prouder of the progress we've made. Our economy as a whole is more durable than it was in the days when we relied on oil from unstable nations and when banks took risky bets with people's hard-earned money. We enacted the most sweeping reforms since the era of President Franklin Roosevelt to protect consumers and prevent a crisis on Wall Street from ever punishing Main Street again. Our auto industry has posted record sales numbers, and our businesses have created almost 16 million new jobs since early 2010. Our energy production has boomed—our dependence on foreign oil now at a more than 30-year low—and thanks to the Affordable Care Act, more than 20 million more Americans now have the peace of mind that comes with having health insurance. Put simply, we turned recession into recovery, and thanks to the hard work, grit, and resilience of the American people, the past 8 years tell a story of progress and prosperity.

Of course, our Nation still faces serious challenges. Too much distrust persists between law enforcement officials and the communities they serve. This past July, after two African American men—in Minnesota and Louisiana—were fatally shot by law enforcement we saw protests across America—including one in Dallas in which 5 brave and honorable police officers who were serving to protect those protesting were shot and killed in an act of horrific violence and hatred. The maintenance of the rule of law is ensured by dedicated public servants who make up police forces across America, and an attack on them is an attack on our very way of life. At the same time, we all must recognize the understandable fear experienced by African Americans who feel unfairly targeted by the criminal justice system. That is why I traveled to the memorial service for the fallen officers—and while there, I saw what all of America saw: how the people of Dallas, out of great suffering, showed us the meaning of perseverance, character, and hope.

We were also forced to face the threat of disease when the Zika virus spread throughout Latin America, the Caribbean, and Puerto Rico. Immediately, my Administration went to work to confront the danger posed by this virus, and I continued my call for Congress to pass nearly $2 billion in funding for things like basic mosquito abatement and vaccine development.

Abroad, a brutal act of terror struck America's oldest ally, France, in an outrageous attack against innocent civilians on Bastille Day. This act reminded us of the extraordinary resilience and democratic values that make France an inspiration to the world, and it reaffirmed that the forces of violence and hate are no match for the power of our resolve to defeat terrorism around the world. In this spirit, the United States continued our campaign to degrade and destroy ISIL, including undertaking a series of strikes to remove key leaders and attack planners. We also took steps, in concert with our allies and partners, to address the human suffering in Aleppo, Syria—perpetrated by the Asad regime with the backing of Russia and Iran—and continued our efforts to deescalate the violence, push for humanitarian access, and allow for a safe egress for those trapped inside the city.

In September, I was honored to be the first American President to visit Laos—a trip that presented an opportunity to reflect on the unlikely bond forged between our peoples out of the anguish of war and to reaffirm our commitment to a relationship based on mutual respect. This visit, coupled with one to China, was followed by my final trip abroad as President of the United States to Greece, Germany, and Peru. And following my visit to Hiroshima last spring, Japanese Prime Minister Abe made an historic gesture by joining me in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii this December to honor those we

lost on December 7, 1941, in another powerful reminder of how even the deepest wounds of war can give way to friendship and lasting peace.

As my second term in Office winded down, our Nation held a Presidential election to ensure the continuity of our Republic, just as we have done every four years since our founding. The 2016 election pitted Republican Donald Trump against Democrat and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton—the first woman ever to be nominated as a Presidential candidate by a major political party. And although the result was not the one I campaigned for, the election served as an important reminder—nearly 100 years after women won the right to vote—that progress in America has never come easy: sometimes taking one step backwards for every two steps forward, it is the result of the long and often tiring work, done by generations of our people, of pushing us toward becoming a more perfect Union and remaking our Nation to more closely align with our highest ideals. The Presidency is bigger than any one person. And that is why my Administration did everything possible to ensure a smooth and peaceful transition—a hallmark of our democracy.

The remarkable work and accomplishments my Administration achieved over the last 8 years has left the next President, and future generations, with a stronger, better country than the one that existed when I took office. And just as is true with any Presidency, the progress we've made was never preordained, and our success never certain: it was the result of that which has always propelled our Union forward—the fierce and mighty conviction of our people that those who love their country can change it and push us in the direction of greater equality, prosperity, and justice. Nearly a decade after I first announced my candidacy for this Office, and just over 240 years since our Founding Fathers altered the trajectory of the world by throwing off the yoke of tyranny and declaring that all men are created equal, my faith in America has not wavered. We remain a place where opportunity is our birthright and hope is our North Star—the hope of slaves sitting around a fire singing freedom songs, and immigrants setting out for distant shores: hope in the face of difficulty, in the face of uncertainty—the audacity of hope. Being President of the United States has been the privilege of my life, and as I prepare to take on the even more important role of citizen once again, I remain tremendously grateful for having had this incredible opportunity to serve the American people.

Preface

This book contains the papers and speeches of the President of the United States that were issued by the Office of the Press Secretary during the period July 1, 2016–January 20, 2017. The material has been compiled and published by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration.

The material is presented in chronological order, and the dates shown in the headings are the dates of the documents or events. In instances when the release date differs from the date of the document itself, that fact is shown in the textnote. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy: Remarks are checked against an audio recording, and signed documents are checked against the original. Textnotes and cross references have been provided by the editors for purposes of identification or clarity. Speeches were delivered in Washington, DC, unless otherwise indicated. The times noted are local times. All materials that are printed in full text in the book have been indexed in the subject and name indexes and listed in the document categories list.

The Public Papers of the Presidents series was begun in 1957 in response to a recommendation of the National Historical Publications Commission. An extensive compilation of messages and papers of the Presidents covering the period 1789 to 1897 was assembled by James D. Richardson and published under congressional authority between 1896 and 1899. Since then, various private compilations have been issued, but there was no uniform publication comparable to the Congressional Record or the United States Supreme Court Reports. Many Presidential papers could be found only in the form of mimeographed White House releases or as reported in the press. The Commission therefore recommended the establishment of an official series in which Presidential writings, addresses, and remarks of a public nature could be made available.

The Commission's recommendation was incorporated in regulations of the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, issued under section 6 of the Federal Register Act (44 U.S.C. 1506), which may be found in title 1, part 10, of the Code of Federal Regulations.

A companion publication to the Public Papers series, the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, was begun in 1965 to provide a broader range of Presidential materials on a more timely basis to meet the needs of the contemporary reader. Beginning with the administration of Jimmy Carter, the Public Papers series expanded its coverage to include additional material as printed in the Weekly Compilation. On January 20, 2009, the printed Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents was superseded by the online Daily Compilation of Presidential Documents. The Daily Compilation provides a listing of the President's daily schedule and meetings, when announced, and other items of general interest issued by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Also included in the printed edition are lists of the President's nominations submitted to the Senate, materials released by the Office of the Press Secretary that are not printed in full text in the book, and proclamations, Executive orders, and other Presidential documents released by the Office of the Press Secretary and published in the *Federal Register*. This information appears in the appendixes at the end of the book.

Volumes covering the administrations of Presidents Herbert Hoover, Harry S. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard Nixon, Gerald R. Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, William J. Clinton, and George W. Bush are also included in the Public Papers series.

The Public Papers of the Presidents publication program is under the direction of John Hyrum Martinez, Director of the Publications and Services Division, Office of the Federal

Register. The series is produced by the Presidential and Legislative Publications Unit, Kimberly Tilliman, Supervisor. The Chief Editor of this book was Joseph K. Vetter; the Managing Editor was Joshua H. Liberatore, assisted by Amelia E. Otovo.

The frontispiece and photographs used in the portfolio were supplied by the White House Photo Office. The typography and design of the book were developed by the Government Publishing Office under the direction of Hugh N. Halpern, Director.

Oliver A. Potts
Director of the Federal Register

David S. Ferriero
Archivist of the United States

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Secretary of the Interior	Sarah M.R. "Sally" Jewell
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Secretary of Labor	Thomas E. Perez
Secretary of Health and Human Services	Sylvia Mathews Burwell
Secretary of Housing and Urban Development	Julián Castro
Secretary of Transportation	Anthony R. Foxx
Secretary of Energy	Ernest J. Moniz
Secretary of Education	John B. King, Jr.
Secretary of Veterans Affairs	Robert A. McDonald
Secretary of Homeland Security	Jeh C. Johnson
Chief of Staff	Denis R. McDonough
Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency	Regina McCarthy
United States Trade Representative	Michael B. Froman
Director of the Office of Management and Budget	Shaun L.S. Donovan
Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers	Jason L. Furman

United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations	Samantha Power
Administrator of the Small Business Administration	Maria Contreras-Sweet

Administration of Barack Obama

2016–2017

Remarks Following a Briefing on Zika Virus Response and Prevention Efforts
July 1, 2016

I just had an opportunity to get the most recent briefing from the Department of Health and Human Services, the CDC, and NIH about the situation involving Zika. And so I wanted to speak to the press just briefly about it and the American public.

As all of you know, there has been an enormous spread of Zika throughout Latin America, the Caribbean, and Puerto Rico. We have not yet seen cases that were transmitted on the continental United States, but we do know that the mosquitoes that carry the Zika virus exist on the continental United States.

We also have seen that in Puerto Rico, Zika has spread rapidly. And Dr. Frieden and members of the CDC who have traveled there have seen that the incidence of the cases of Zika—not just among the general population, but among pregnant women—has been spiking. So it is absolutely critical for the United States Government, working in concert with other governments in the hemisphere, to be pushing hard right now to get this situation under control.

Now, the good news is that for the most part, Zika is not a type of disease like Ebola, where it's life threatening. It is—in some cases, folks may not even have symptoms that are significant. But what we do know is, is that if pregnant women are infected it can have severe consequences for the fetus and a child that's born and has been impacted by the Zika virus.

So we have been issuing guidelines in terms of folks who are of childbearing age, who are thinking about starting a family. We know that men can transmit Zika through their semen if they are infected. And so we have issued a range of guidelines about how to approach this problem.

But the most important thing that we can do right now is to actually reduce the incidence of Zika. We can issue precautions for travel to areas that have Zika. We can give people guidelines in terms of how to deal with it if they get infected. But this is actually something that we could reduce the risks if Congress does the right thing and allocates the dollars that are needed right now to get the job done.

In a briefing by Dr. Fauci, at the NIH, the good news is, is that we feel fairly confident that we can develop a effective vaccine for Zika. And that would help a whole lot of people and allow us to get out in front of this problem before it's in the continental United States. But that requires research money. And in order for a vaccine to be widely available it has to be tested to make sure it's safe; it has to be tested to make sure that it is effective.

And we're beginning right now on a whole bunch of promising pathways to get those tests done so that in fairly short order we might have a vaccine available and people wouldn't have to worry about this. The problem is right now that that money is stuck in Congress. And we have not seen the House and the Senate come together in a sensible way to put forward the dollars that we have requested that have been budgeted to get the job done.

So what I want the American people to understand is that I expect Congress to get this funding done before they leave for vacation, before they adjourn. That's part of their basic responsibility. We put forward a budget request of $1.9 billion. We didn't draw that figure from the clouds; it was based on the assessment of our scientists and our experts in terms of what was going to be needed for basic mosquito abatement and vaccine development and making sure that we've got the proper diagnostic tools so that we can respond effectively to protect the health and safety of the American people.

And that request has been up there for quite some time and has gotten caught up in politics. And we've seen people trying to attach legislation on a bunch of unrelated topics to this funding. It's been politics as usual rather than

responding smartly to a very serious public health request.

So just to summarize, number one, we have put forward guidelines in terms of travel to areas that have Zika, and we are recommending that pregnant women or women of childbearing years who are thinking about being pregnant or individuals who are traveling to Zika-infected areas, male partners who want to make sure that they're not infecting their spouses or their partners, that they have to take a look and see whether they're traveling in the right places. That's point number one. And you can go to the CDC website in order to find out how you can protect yourself. Stay informed and protect yourself during this summer.

Point number two is, we have a crisis right now in Puerto Rico surrounding Zika, and we have to obtain the resources to make sure that we are engaging in mosquito abatement and providing the kind of basic health services to reduce the effects of Zika in Puerto Rico. And at a time when Puerto Rico is already going through a tough time and its public health infrastructure is being strained because of budget constraints and debt problems, it's especially important that we're responsive to the millions of American citizens who live there.

And keep in mind that there's a lot of travel back and forth between Puerto Rico and the continental United States. So this is not something that, ultimately, may end up just being isolated there. That's point number two.

And point number three: We have to get the money from Congress over the next 2 weeks to make sure that we can begin to develop the effective vaccines, the mosquito abatement tools, the State emergency response dollars so that all of us are safe and we're not seeing families dealing with tragedies that can last a lifetime.

This is just common sense. And this is not the time to play politics. There are going to be all kinds of negotiations up on Capitol Hill around budget items for the remainder of the year, and that's to be expected; that's what happens during budget negotiations. But when there are emergencies, when there are public health emergencies, when we know that we have the chance to prevent serious tragedies in the lives of families and protect the health and safety of our populations—and particularly our children—then those politics need to be set aside.

So Congress should not leave, should not adjourn until they have this done. And I want all the American people to know that we have a chance of developing a vaccine quickly that will help a lot of people as long as Congress, over the next few weeks, does its job. Okay?

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Thomas R. Frieden; and National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Anthony S. Fauci. Also participating in the briefing was Secretary of Health and Human Services Sylvia Mathews Burwell.

The President's Weekly Address
July 2, 2016

Hi, everybody, and happy Fourth of July weekend. On Monday, Michelle, Malia, Sasha, and I will celebrate the Fourth just like most of you: in the backyard. We'll hang out with family and friends, throw some burgers and dogs on the grill, and watch the fireworks show.

Of course, we're fortunate enough to have the South Lawn as our backyard. So we're going to fill it with hundreds of our troops, our veterans, and their families. Over the past 7½ years, it's become one of my favorite traditions. We get to celebrate our freedoms while doing what we can to honor all those who serve and sacrifice to make that freedom possible. And I know that honoring our servicemembers, our veterans, and their families is something that so many Americans try to do every day, without fanfare or expectation of anything in return.

For the past 5 years, Michelle and Dr. Jill Biden have tried to follow the example of so

many of those Americans with their Joining Forces initiative. They've rallied businesses to hire more than 1.2 million veterans and military spouses and helped to reduce veteran homelessness. And just this week, Michelle and Jill announced a breakthrough on a concern they've heard again and again from the military spouses they spend so much time with, and that's the issue of professional licensing.

This is something that most Americans aren't familiar with. But for military families, it's a big challenge. Here's why. Our troops are often transferred from base to base. It's part of the job. And because their families serve with them, that means their spouses move 10 times more often than the rest of us. Ten times more often. As you might expect, that's tough on a career. And more than one in three of these spouses works in a profession that requires a professional license or certification: nurses, childcare providers, accountants, social workers, and lots of other jobs.

And until recently, when these spouses were asked to move across State lines, they often needed to recertify for a job they're already qualified for. A nurse with years of experience might have to take entry-level courses or pay a fee or wait months for paperwork to be processed before he or she could get back to work on the job they love and that lets them support their families.

It didn't make any sense. So we changed it. When Michelle and Jill took up this cause 5 years ago, only three States had taken action on military spouse licensing. But they rallied Governors and State legislatures into action. And this week, we reached a milestone. Today, all 50 States have acted to streamline many of these licensing issues. This is a big step forward, but we're not done yet. We're going to keep working with States to make licensing simpler for more jobs and reach more qualified workers. But we can finally say to so many of our military families, when you move, you'll no longer be forced to put the career you love on hold just because you and your family have chosen to serve this country.

That's what this is all about: serving our men and women in uniform as well as they have served us. But you don't have to be a Governor or a First Lady to make a difference. So this holiday weekend, take a look at joiningforces.gov to find out how you can serve the troops, veterans, and military families in your community.

And to all our brave men and women in uniform: You represent the best of who we are as a nation. On this day and every day, we thank you.

Have a great Fourth of July, everybody.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:10 p.m. on July 1 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on July 2. In the address, the President referred to Jill T. Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 1, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on July 2. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the Death of Elie Wiesel
July 2, 2016

Elie Wiesel was one of the great moral voices of our time and, in many ways, the conscience of the world. Tonight Michelle and I join people across the United States, Israel, and around the globe in mourning the loss and celebrating the life of a truly remarkable human being. Like millions of admirers, I first came to know Elie through his account of the horror he endured during the Holocaust simply because he was Jewish. But I was also honored and deeply humbled to call him a dear friend. I'm especially grateful for all the moments we shared and our talks together, which ranged from the meaning of friendship to our shared commitment to the State of Israel.

Elie was not just the world's most prominent Holocaust survivor, he was a living memorial. After we walked together among the barbed

wire and guard towers of Buchenwald, where he was held as a teenager and where his father perished, Elie spoke words I've never forgotten: "Memory has become a sacred duty of all people of good will." Upholding that sacred duty was the purpose of Elie's life. Along with his beloved wife Marion and the foundation that bears his name, he raised his voice, not just against anti-Semitism, but against hatred, bigotry, and intolerance in all its forms. He implored each of us, as nations and as human beings, to do the same, to see ourselves in each other and to make real that pledge of "never again."

At the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum that he helped create, you can see his words: "For the dead and the living, we must bear witness." But Elie did more than just bear witness, he acted. As a writer, a speaker, an activist, and a thinker, he was one of those people who changed the world more as a citizen of the world than those who hold office or traditional positions of power. His life, and the power of his example, urges us to be better. In the face of evil, we must summon our capacity for good. In the face of hate, we must love. In the face of cruelty, we must live with empathy and compassion. We must never be bystanders to injustice or indifferent to suffering. Just imagine the peace and justice that would be possible in our world if we all lived a little more like Elie Wiesel.

At the end of our visit to Buchenwald, Elie said that after all that he and the other survivors had endured, "we had the right to give up on humanity." But he said, "we rejected that possibility . . . we said, no, we must continue believing in a future." Tonight we give thanks that Elie never gave up on humanity and on the progress that is possible when we treat one another with dignity and respect. Our thoughts are with Marion, their son Shlomo Elisha, his stepdaughter Jennifer, and his grandchildren, whom we thank for sharing Elie with the world. May God bless the memory of Elie Wiesel, and may his soul be bound up in the bond of eternal life.

NOTE: The statement referred to Shlomo Elisha Wiesel, son, and Jennifer Rose, stepdaughter, of Mr. Wiesel.

Remarks at an Independence Day Celebration
July 4, 2016

Thank you so much! Ms. Janelle Monáe! Come on out here and give a bow! Thank you so much. So, in addition to Janelle Monáe, please give Kendrick Lamar a big round of applause! Here he is, right here.

So on behalf of all of us, obviously we were hoping to share their incredible talents with 5,000 people out on the South Lawn. And Fourth of July is about family, it's about the American family, it's about us getting together with the people we love most.

We all know that our freedoms are dependent on an incredible group of men and women in uniform and their families who look out for us every single day. The—some of them are in attendance here today. Please give them a big round of applause. For those in our military who could not attend, we just want to say how much we admire, respect, and appreciate everything you do to fight for our freedom every single day.

And obviously, the Fourth of July, we enjoy the hotdogs, we enjoy the burgers, we enjoy the barbecue, we enjoy the day off for a lot of us—[*laughter*]—we enjoy the fireworks. But it's important to remember what a miracle this country is. How incredible—how incredibly lucky we are that people, generations ago, were willing to take up arms and fight for our freedom. And then people inside this country understanding that there were imperfections in our Union and were willing to keep on fighting on behalf of extending that freedom to all people and not just some.

And that story of independence is not something that happens and then we just put away. It's something that we have to fight for every single day. It's something that we have to nur-

ture, and we have to spread the word, and we have to work on. And it involves us respecting each other. And it involves us recognizing that there are still people in this country who are going hungry, and they're not free because of that. There are still people in this country who can't find work, and freedom without the ability to contribute to society and put a roof over your head and your—look after your family, that's not yet what we aim for.

And so, on a day like this, we celebrate, we have fun, we marvel at everything that's been done before, but we also have to recommit ourselves to making sure that everybody in this country is free, that everybody has opportunity, that everybody gets a fair shot, that we look after all of our veterans when they come home, that we look after our military families and give them a fair shake, that every child has a good education. That is what we should be striving for on Independence Day.

So, to all of you who are here in this amazing gathering, we love you, and we're grateful that you could join us. To our incredible artists, thank you for always sharing. I've got to tell you—I have to tell you that these two I've gotten a chance to know, and they are both amazing artists and talented and popular and doing great things, but they're also very conscious about their responsibilities and obligations. And they put in a lot of time and effort on behalf of a lot of causes that are important. We're really proud of them for that.

And just because it's a job of a father to embarrass his daughters—[*laughter*]—I've got one last job. It is—it just so happens that we celebrate our country's birthday on the same day that we celebrate my oldest daughter's birthday. So just a quick happy birthday for Malia.

[*At this point, the President led audience members in singing "Happy Birthday."*]

Thank you, everybody. God bless you. God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:57 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to musicians Janelle Monáe and Kendrick Lamar Duckworth. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the audio was incomplete.

Remarks at a Fundraiser for Democratic Presidential Candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton in Charlotte, North Carolina
July 5, 2016

The President. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

Oh! How are you doing, Charlotte? Are you fired up? You ready to go? Well, fired up!

Audience members. Ready to go!

The President. I'm fired up. Hillary got me fired up. She got me ready to do some work. So I hope everybody had a great Fourth of July.

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you back.

I—now, first of all, let me just say I like any excuse to come to North Carolina. I just like North Carolina. I love the people in North Carolina. I used to—when we used to campaign here, I used to say, even the people who aren't voting for me are nice. You know, that's not true everywhere. [*Laughter*] So you've got great people here. And then you've got great food. North Carolina has got some food. In fact, I will find someplace to stop and get some food before I head back to DC. I know you all have recommendations. [*Laughter*] I know I can't go to your house to get the food. [*Laughter*] Although I'm sure you're an excellent cook.

And then you've got great basketball. [*Applause*] You've got great basketball. We all know that. We all know that. But I'm not going to get in between all the Tar Heel and Wolfpack and—[*applause*]—you know. Yes, Blue Devils. I—see, Deacons. I'm not going to get into all that. You just have great basketball in

North Carolina. So I love an excuse to come to North Carolina.

But I'm here for a simple reason. I'm glad to see our outstanding congressional delegation. You are lucky to have them. I'm glad you've got an outstanding candidate for the Senate and an outstanding candidate for Governor. And I'm going to be working for them too. But I'm here today because I believe in Hillary Clinton, and I want you to help elect her to be the next President of the United States of America. That's why I'm here. Now, this is not—[*laughter*].

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. Now, as Hillary mentioned, this is not the first time we campaigned together. We went up to New Hampshire after our primary in 2008. We went to Unity, New Hampshire, just in case people missed the point. [*Laughter*] That was the name of the town, Unity, New Hampshire. And we had gone through what was one of the longest, toughest primaries in history. And primaries are always tough, because you're arguing with your friends instead of the folks you disagree with. Sometimes, you've got to find things to disagree about even though you don't really disagree. [*Laughter*] So we were crisscrossing towns from New Hampshire to Nevada. And as much as I had admired her when we served together in the Senate, I came away from that primary admiring her even more.

Because during that year and a half, I had had a chance to see up close just how smart she was and just how prepared she was, especially since I had to debate her a couple dozen times. [*Laughter*] And let's be clear, she beat me, like, in the first—now, you don't have to rub it in. You don't have to rub it in, now. [*Laughter*] She beat me at least the first half, and then I just barely could play her to a draw. [*Laughter*] I always had to be on my game because she knew every fact and she knew every detail.

And then, during those 18 months, I saw the passion that she feels for anybody who's experienced injustice, anybody who's faced discrimination, anybody who does everything right and still can't seem to get a fair shot, whether it was workers who had lost their jobs or kids unable to afford college. And you could tell it was personal to her because she had seen struggles in her own life. She had known challenges in her own life. And she could identify and empathize with people who were doing the right thing and wanted to make sure that they got a fair shake.

And then, during the primaries, again and again, I saw how, even when things didn't go her way, she'd just stand up straighter and come back stronger. She didn't give up. She didn't pout. She just kept on going. She was the Energizer Bunny. [*Laughter*] She just kept on.

And the bottom line is, she had to do everything I had to do, but she was like Ginger Rogers: She had to do it backwards in heels. And at the end of our contest, I saw the grace and the energy with which she threw herself into my campaign, not because she wasn't disappointed about the outcome of the primary, but because she knew there was something that was at stake that was bigger than either of us, and that was the direction of our country and how are we going to make sure that all the people who were counting on us could see a better life.

So we may have gone toe to toe from coast to coast, but we stood shoulder to soldier—shoulder to shoulder for the ideals that we share. So maybe Hillary was surprised, but I wasn't surprised when I asked Hillary to represent our interests and our values around the world as America's Secretary of State. I knew she would do a great job. I knew she would perform. I knew the regard in which she was held in capitals all around the world. I knew that the minute she took that job, there was a stature and a seriousness that would immediately mend some of the challenges that we had had around the world during that time.

Now, let me tell you, North Carolina, my faith in Hillary Clinton has always been rewarded. I have had a front row seat to her judgment and her toughness and her commitment to diplomacy. And I witnessed it in the Situation Room, where she argued in favor of the mission to get bin Laden. I saw how, as a former Senator from New York, she knew, she understood because she had seen it, she had witnessed it, what this would mean for the

thousands who had lost loved ones when the Twin Towers fell.

I've benefited from her savvy and her skill in foreign capitals, where her pursuit of diplomacy led to new partnerships, opened up new nations to democracy, helped to reduce the nuclear threat.

We've all witnessed the work she's done to advance the lives of women and girls around the globe. She has been working on this since she was a young woman working at the Children's Defense Fund. She's not late to the game at this. She's been going door to door to make sure kids got a fair share, making sure kids with disabilities could get a quality education. She's been fighting those fights, and she's got the scars to prove it.

Audience member. Thank you, Hillary!

The President. And Hillary and I shared—we shared a big hug the first time we saw each other after we finally realized one of the great causes of her career, finally guaranteeing access to quality, affordable health insurance for every single American. Because that's something she got started, and we picked up that baton and were able to get it across the finish line.

The bottom line is, she was a great Secretary of State. And by the way, that's not just my opinion. That was the view of the American people and pundits throughout the time that she was serving as Secretary of State, before the whole political machinery got moving. You remember that? It wasn't that long ago. It's funny how that happens. [*Laughter*] Everybody thought she was doing a great job.

Audience member. She did do a great job.

The President. That's because she did do a good job. But it's funny how the filter changes a little bit. Same person, done the same work, but that filter is a powerful thing.

But it wasn't just what happened in the limelight that made me grow more and more to admire and respect Hillary. It was how she acted when the cameras weren't on. It was knowing how she did her homework. It was knowing how many miles she put in traveling to make sure that America was effectively represented in corners of the globe that people don't even know about. There wasn't any political points to be had, but she knew that it was important.

I saw how she treated everybody with respect, even the folks who aren't, quote, unquote, "important." That's how you judge somebody. It's how do they treat somebody when the cameras are off and they can't do anything for you. Do you still treat them right? Do you still treat them with respect? Do you still listen to them? Are you still fighting for them?

I saw how deeply she believes in the things she fights for. And I saw how you can count on her, and how she won't waver and she won't back down. And she will not quit, no matter how difficult the challenge and no matter how fierce the opposition.

And if there's one thing I can tell you, Charlotte, is, those things matter. Those things matter. I'm here to tell you that the truth is, nobody fully understands the challenges of the job of President until you've actually sat at that desk. Everybody has got an opinion. But nobody actually knows the job until you're sitting behind the desk. Everybody can tweet, but nobody actually knows what it takes to do the job until you've sat behind the desk.

I mean, Sasha tweets, but she doesn't—[*laughter*]—think that she's—thereby should be sitting behind the desk. [*Laughter*] So you can't fully understand what it means to make life-and-death decisions until you've done it. That's the truth.

But I can tell you this. Hillary Clinton has been tested. She has seen up close what's involved in making those decisions. She has participated in the meetings in which those decisions have been made. She's seen the consequence of things working well and things not working well. And there has never been any man or woman more qualified for this office than Hillary Clinton—ever. And that's the truth.

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. That's the truth.

So the bottom line is, I know Hillary can do the job. And that's why I am so proud, North

Carolina, to endorse Hillary Clinton as the next President of the United States.

Now, I recognize, to some degree, I'm preaching to the choir. [*Laughter*] I know I probably don't need to tell anybody here why we need Hillary's steadiness and her levelheadedness and her brilliance and her temperament right now.

Audience member. Right now!

The President. Right now. Because we've been through some tumultuous times in this new century.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. And we'll continue to face all kinds of challenges and change in the years ahead. And in—this November, in this election, you are going to have a very clear choice to make between two fundamentally different visions of where America should go. And this isn't even really a choice between left and right or Democrat or Republican, this is a choice between whether we are going to cling to some imaginary past or whether we're going to reach for the future. This is about whether we have an America that works for everybody or just a few people.

And Hillary is not somebody who fears the future. She believes that it is ours to shape, the same way it's always has been. Hillary understands that we make our own destiny as long as we're together, as long as we think of ourselves not as just a collection of individuals or a collection of interest groups or a collection of States, but as the United States of America. She knows that.

She know that when it comes to our economy. Because she knows that our economy works best not when it only benefits a few at the top, but when everybody has got a fair shot at success. As Hillary mentioned—look, when I came into office, things were not in very good shape, you will recall. [*Laughter*] We were losing 800,000 jobs a month, pursuing, by the way, the same proposals that the Republicans are still peddling. And over the past 6 years, our businesses have created more than 14 million new jobs. We've cut the unemployment rate in half. Manufacturing jobs have grown for the first time since another President Clinton was in office. By the way—and by the way, because they're always talking about us being these spendthrift Democrats, I just want to point out, we cut our deficit by nearly 75 percent. They didn't. They did not.

Wages for families are finally starting to rise again. But we've got so much more work to do. Because in the 21st century, we're not going to help families, we're not going to create jobs just by pretending that we can turn back the clock and women are going to somehow not be in the workforce anymore and people of color suddenly are not going to be competing and wanting a better future for their kids. We're not going to suddenly ignore all the progress that's been made over the last 30 years. We're not going to build walls around America or put technology back in a box. We're not going to reverse hard-won rights for women or minorities or Americans with disabilities to fully participate in the workforce. We're not going to do that.

If we're going to give working families—all families—a chance to succeed, we've got to make sure they can afford childcare and they've got sick leave and paid leave. And we've got to make sure women get equal pay for equal work. And we should make it easier, not harder, for workers to organize for better wages and working conditions. And we shouldn't eliminate the minimum wage, we should raise it high enough so if you work full time, you don't live in poverty.

Each of these policies—the policies Hillary mentioned—would help working families feel more secure in today's economy. She's actually got a plan. It's actually paid for. [*Laughter*] You can actually look at it. [*Laughter*]

Now, the fact that we haven't gotten all these ideas done, it's not the fault of immigrants or unions or some liberal socialist scheme. It's very simple: Republicans in Congress and Republican Governors have been blocking these ideas for the last 8 years. It's that simple.

So look, I just want to be clear, not everybody votes on the economy, I understand. There are other issues. But if your concern is who's going to look out for working families, if

you're voting your pocketbook, if you're asking who's actually going to stand up for the guy on the construction site or the guy in the factory or the woman who's cleaning a hotel room or somebody who's really working hard—the working family—if that's your concern, this isn't even a choice. Because the other side has nothing to offer you. [*Applause*] The other side has got nothing to offer you.

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. I'm going a little off script here, but I just want to repeat this. If your concern is working people, then this is not a choice. I don't care whether you're White, Black, Hispanic, Native American, polka dot, male, female. I don't care. If what you care is who's going to be fighting for ordinary folks who are fighting for a better life for themselves and their children, then I don't know how you vote for the guy who's against the minimum wage, against unions, against making sure that everybody gets a fair shot, against legislation for equal pay, against sick leave and family leave, against all the things that working families care about.

So, if you're voting for the other team, it's not because of the economy. It's not because of the economy. You've got to be clear about that. Even the Republicans on the other side don't really know what the guy is talking about. [*Laughter*] They really don't. They really don't. If you ask them, they're all, like, "I don't know." [*Laughter*] Then they kind of duck the other way. Am I joking? No.

So you can choose a path that divides us with harsh rhetoric and pits working people against each other, all the while pushing policies that will just help folks at the top do even better. But that's not helping working families. Or we can transform our politics so they're responsive to working families, so that all people of all races and all backgrounds get a higher wage and all folks get quality health care and a decent retirement and all children in this country get a better education that lets them dream bigger than their circumstances. That's what Hillary Clinton believes. And that's why I'm supporting her for President of the United States. And that's why you should too.

Now, to me, that, in and of itself, would be enough to make the choice. But we've got some other choices. You can go the path that denies climate change is real, or you can choose a path where American jobs and businesses lead the world to combat it. Over the last 7 years, we have doubled renewable energy in this country. We've—remember when we were all concerned about our dependence on foreign oil? Well, let me tell you, we've cut the amount of oil we buy from other countries in half. Remember when the other team was promising they were going to get gas prices down in, like, 10 years and—[*applause*]? We did it. Did it.

So we've been able to shape an energy policy that's good for families, good for your pocketbook. And with Secretary Clinton's help, America ultimately led nearly 200 other nations to an agreement to save this planet for future generations. Now, maybe you don't care about this; maybe you think 99 percent of scientists are wrong. [*Laughter*] Or you can——

Audience members. Thank you, President Obama!

The President. You're welcome.

But the point is, we're not done with this. So where we go from here is up to you. You can vote with the climate deniers who want to tear up the agreements we've crafted and doom our kids to a more dangerous world, or you can vote to keep putting people back to work building a cleaner energy future for all of us. That's part of what's at stake in this election. That's one of the reasons I'm supporting Hillary Clinton for President.

Hillary mentioned how we operate on the world stage. Now, let me just say, I know the other guy talks about making America great again. I—America is really great. And just the other day, somebody was writing about, wow, when you look at the surveys in the world, it turns out that when Obama came into office, the world didn't think we were that great, but now they think we're the greatest. They think we're the strongest. They think we're the best positioned. We were in a hole before I came into office. But right now the world—the rest of the world thinks we're pretty darn great.

And by the way, you can look that up. That's a fact. That's not, like, just something I just made up and tweeted. [*Laughter*] So there are actually, like, surveys done. They poll people so you actually know what people think. You don't just assert it. And it turns out, that's what they think. You can look it up. [*Laughter*]

Part of the reason is because we had an outstanding Secretary of State. Part of the reason is, is that Hillary understood and continues to understand that just a bunch of tough talk doesn't replace the hard work of diplomacy. A bunch of phony bluster doesn't keep us safe. And she understands we can't retreat from a world that needs American leadership. That's why she offers a smarter approach that uses every element of American power to protect our people and to protect our allies.

She is and will be a stateswoman who makes us proud around the world. She'll deploy diplomacy whenever possible, but she also knows what it takes to be a Commander in Chief, and I know she will never hesitate to use force when it is necessary to protect us. And she'll know how to mobilize the world around the causes that we believe in, that we know are right, and make sure other countries pull their own weight. That's strength. That's leadership. And that's why Hillary Clinton has to be the next President of the United States of America.

Audience members. I'm with her! I'm with her! I'm with her!

The President. I am with her!

Audience members. I'm with her! I'm with her! I'm with her!

The President. I am with her. You know, part of the reason why we are here is because we all share the belief that this country only lives up to its potential when every single one of us get a chance to succeed. Black, White, Latino, Asian, Native American, young, old, rich, poor——

Audience member. Turkish——

The President. ——Turkish American—[*laughter*]—gay, straight, male, female—all of us matter. All of us share the same creed. All of us pledge allegiance to the same flag. That doesn't mean we have to agree on everything. We all have different ideas and beliefs, and that's part of what makes America great.

But I agree with Hillary that our democracy works best when there are basic bonds of trust between us; when we recognize that every voice matters and the people who disagree with us most strongly love our country just as much as we do. You never heard Hillary Clinton demonize other people. You haven't heard her not be willing to engage in folks even when they disagree with her. You ask about folks in the Senate who were on the other side, they liked working with her. Even though some of them had done everything they could to tear her down when she was First Lady, she still worked with them.

And that brand of leadership is how we're going to get things done. That's how we can protect more of our kids from gun violence. After Newtown, the other side blocked any new gun safety reforms. After Orlando, they blocked any new gun safety reforms. They're not listening to 90 percent of the American people—Democrats and Republicans—who support background checks. And making sure somebody who's on a no-fly list can't actually go out and purchase an automatic rifle. Hillary knows how to build coalitions. And she knows we can take smart steps that protect both our rights and our kids so they can go to the movies or to church or to a nightclub or to school. And if you believe that, too, then there's no choice here: You've got to vote for Hillary Clinton.

Her brand of leadership can fix a broken immigration system so that it lives up to our tradition as a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants. You know, unless you're a Native American, somebody brought you here. [*Laughter*] Somebody came here. You came from someplace else, now. So I just want to be clear about that. And not everybody had their papers straight when they came. I'm just saying.

And there are millions of striving young people whose lives hang in the balance. And they want to give something back to this country that they love. They want to serve in our military. They want to go to college. They want to be doctors. They want to cure diseases. And for

years, the Republicans who run this Congress, they talk a good game about immigration reform, and then they don't do anything. And now they've picked a nominee whose only plan is to build a higher wall. That's not a plan——

Audience members. Boo!

The President. No, no, no. Hold on a second. I was waiting for this opportunity: Don't boo——

Audience members. Vote!

The President. ——vote! [*Applause*] Don't boo, vote! Booing doesn't help! You need to vote!

But if you care about a smart immigration policy that controls our borders and makes sure that it's lawful, but also gives everybody opportunity, then this is your candidate. You've got to vote in this election.

And you know what, if you don't think your vote matters, if you don't think the stakes are high enough, remember that just last month, the Supreme Court could not reach a decision involving immigration because Republicans in the Senate had refused to just do their job and just have the courtesy to meet with a nominee that even they admit is one of the most qualified ever to be nominated to a seat on the Supreme Court. Won't even give him a hearing. Won't even give him an up-or-down vote. They'd rather have their nominee for President choose his own Justice to fill that seat.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo——

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Got to vote!

He wants to nominate a Justice who views the world he does. That's not a good thing. [*Laughter*]

Audience members. No!

The President. That's not what you want on the highest court in the land.

The Supreme Court is no joke. The people who sit on that Bench make monumental decisions that affect all of your rights, our responsibilities and duties to each other as citizens, affect every aspect of our daily lives. This is not a reality show. This is not entertainment, this is real. This is not a reality show, this is reality. And being President of the United States means you've have to deal with——

Audience members. Reality.

When a crisis hits, you can't just walk off the set. [*Laughter*] You can't fire the scriptwriter. [*Laughter*] You can't be reckless. You don't have the luxury of just saying whatever pops into your head. You've actually got to know what you're talking about. You've got to actually do your homework. You can't just kick out reporters. [*Laughter*] You can't go to another country, and if they ask you a question you don't like, just kick them out—[*laughter*]—because you're in another country. You've got to apply steady judgment, even when things don't go your way. You've got to make the tough calls, even when they're not popular and even when they won't pay off right away or increase your poll numbers. You've got to be able to handle criticism without taking it personally. You've just got to brush it off and get the job done.

That's some of what I've learned while serving as your President. That's some of what Hillary has learned as a Senator and as Secretary of State. And that's why I'm voting for Hillary Clinton to be the next President of the United States.

I know I've gone on too long. That's what happens—you haven't campaigned in a while, you start just enjoying it too much. So let me just simplify this. And let me be blunt. I want to be blunt. Can I be blunt? [*Laughter*] I'm going to be blunt. You know, Hillary has got her share of critics. That's what happens when you're somebody who's actually in the arena. That's what happens when you've fought for what you believe in. That's what happens when you dedicate yourselves to public service over the course of a lifetime. And what sets Hillary Clinton apart from so many others is, she never stopped caring, she never stopped trying.

We're a young country, so we like new things. And I've benefited from that culture, let's face it. When I came on the scene in '08, everybody said, "Well, he's new." [*Laughter*] They don't say that now, because I'm not. But sometimes, we take somebody who's been in the trenches and fought the good fight and been steady for granted. Sometimes, we act as if never having done something and not knowing what you're doing is a virtue. [*Laughter*]

We don't do that, by the way, for airline pilots. [*Laughter*] We don't do that for surgeons. But somehow we think, President of the United States, yes, let's just give—I don't know—who's that guy? Come on. [*Laughter*]

And so, as a consequence, that means that sometimes Hillary doesn't get the credit that she deserves.

Audience members. That's right!

The President. But the fact is, Hillary is steady. And Hillary is true. And she's been in politics for the same reason I am: because we can improve other people's lives by doing this work. And we don't care about the slings and arrows that are thrown at us, because we know that's how real change and real progress happens and that we, if we're willing to work hard, can finish—can bring about changes that make life better for some kid out there, some senior out there, somebody who's unemployed out there.

And it may take more than a year. And sometimes, it takes more than a term. And sometimes, it takes more than one Presidency or even one generation. And yes, that's old fashioned. I think she'll fess up to that. [*Laughter*] But we want people to believe that their Government can work and that the President cares and that every child in this country should have the same chance that this country gave us.

Because we weren't born with a silver spoon. And we know that behind all the division and sometimes angry rhetoric of this election year and all the petty bickering and the point scoring and the punditry, the ordinary American—Americans are good. And they are generous. And they are hard working. And they've got an awful lot of common sense. And we share a certain set of common values and hopes and dreams.

That's why I ran in 2008. And I believe in those values and those ideals more than ever. And I believe in you, the American people, more than ever. And I am more optimistic about our future than ever. And that's why my faith—my faith—is stronger about the simple American ideal as old as our founding that people who love their country can change it for the better. I have seen it happen.

I have run my last campaign. And I couldn't be prouder of the things we've done together. But I'm ready to pass the baton. And I know that Hillary Clinton is going to take it. And I know she can run that race: the race to create good jobs and better schools and safer streets and a safer world. And that's why I'm fired up! And that's why I'm ready to go! And that's why I'm with her!

And that's why I need you to work just as hard to make sure that Hillary Rodham Clinton is the next President of the United States of America.

God bless you, North Carolina. God bless you! God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:47 p.m. at the Charlotte Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Sen. Richard M. Burr; North Carolina State Attorney General Roy A. Cooper III, in his capacity as a Democratic gubernatorial candidate; Donald J. Trump, chairman and president, Trump Organization, in his capacity as a Republican Presidential candidate; and Supreme Court Associate Justice–designate Merrick B. Garland.

Statement on the Death of Former White House Counsel Abner J. Mikva
July 5, 2016

No matter how far we go in life, we owe a profound debt of gratitude to those who gave us those first, firm pushes at the start. For me, one of those people was Ab Mikva. When I was graduating law school, Ab encouraged me to pursue public service. He saw something in me that I didn't yet see in myself, but I know why he did it: Ab represented the best of public service himself, and he believed in empowering the next generation of young people to shape our country. Ab's life was a testament to that truth. Six decades ago, when he first tried to volunteer in Democratic politics, the Chicago political machine told him that they "don't

want nobody nobody sent." Ab didn't take no for an answer, because he knew that in America, in our democracy, everybody can be somebody, everybody matters.

That conviction led Ab, a son of immigrants and a World War II veteran, to serve Illinois as a State legislator and serve our Nation in every branch of Government: as a Congressman, Federal judge, and White House Counsel. In every position he held, Ab's integrity and wisdom consistently put him on the right side of history, from fighting against prejudice and discrimination and for free speech and civil liberties. He reformed Illinois's criminal code, defended consumers' rights, and although his decision striking down the ban on gay Americans serving in our military was overturned, history proved him right.

Like so many admirers, I've lost a mentor and a friend. But as we mourn his passing, I'm comforted by the thought that countless Americans will continue fighting for progressive causes Ab believed in because he pushed them toward public service, both during his time in Government and through Mikva Challenge, which he established with his wonderful wife Zoe. We're all better off because we were sent Ab Mikva, and because Ab in turn sent us forward to do big things. Michelle and I send our deepest condolences to Zoe, their three daughters, seven grandchildren, and the generations of young patriots Ab inspired. May his memory be for a blessing.

NOTE: The statement referred to Mary L. Mikva, Laurie I. Mikva, and Rachel Mikva Rosenberg, daughters of Mr. Mikva.

Statement on the Final Report of the Commission on Care
July 5, 2016

I want to thank the members of the Commission on Care for their comprehensive and thorough review of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) and for their considered recommendations. In August 2014, I signed into law the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act (VACAA) of 2014, which charged the Commission to examine veterans' access to VA health care and to recommend how best to organize the VHA, locate health resources, and deliver health care to veterans during the next 20 years.

The Commission's report includes a number of specific proposals that I look forward to reviewing closely over the coming weeks. We will continue to work with veterans, Congress, and our partners in the veteran advocacy community to further our ongoing transformation of the veterans' health care system. Our veterans deserve nothing less for their sacrifices and their service.

Remarks on United States Military Strategy in Afghanistan
July 6, 2016

Good morning, everybody.

More than 14 years ago, after Al Qaida attacked our Nation on 9/11, the United States went to war in Afghanistan against these terrorists and the Taliban that harbored them. Over the years—and thanks to heroic efforts by our military, our intelligence community, our diplomats, and our development professionals—we pushed Al Qaida out of its camps, helped the Afghan people topple the Taliban and helped them establish a democratic government. We dealt crippling blows to the Al Qaida leadership. We delivered justice to Usama bin Laden. And we trained Afghan forces to take responsibility for their own security.

And given that progress, a year and a half ago, in December 2014, America's combat mission in Afghanistan came to a responsible end. Compared to the 100,000 troops we once had there, today, fewer than 10,000 remain. And compared to their previous mission—helping to lead the fight—our forces are now

focused on two narrow missions: training and advising Afghan forces and supporting counterterrorist operations against the remnants of Al Qaida as well as other terrorist groups, including ISIL. In short, even as we've maintained a relentless case against those who are threatening us, we are no longer engaged in a major ground war in Afghanistan.

But even these narrow missions continue to be dangerous. Over the past year and a half, 38 Americans—military and civilian—have lost their lives in Afghanistan on behalf of our security. And we honor their sacrifice. We stand with their families in their grief and in their pride. And we resolve to carry on the mission for which they gave their last full measure of devotion.

This is also not America's mission alone. In Afghanistan, we're joined by 41 allies and partners, a coalition that contributes more than 6,000 troops of their own. We have a partner in the Afghan Government and the Afghan people, who support a long-term strategic partnership with the United States. And in fact, Afghans continue to step up. For the second year now, Afghan forces are fully responsible for their own security. Every day, nearly 320,000 Afghan soldiers and police are serving and fighting, and many are giving their lives to defend their country.

To their credit—and in the face of a continued Taliban insurgency and terrorist networks—Afghan forces remain in control of all the major population centers, provincial capitals, major transit routes and most district centers. Afghan forces have beaten back attacks, and they've pushed the Taliban out of some areas. And meanwhile, in another milestone, we recently removed the leader of the Taliban, Akhtar Mohammad Mansur.

Nevertheless, the security situation in Afghanistan remains precarious. Even as they improve, Afghan security forces are still not as strong as they need to be. With our help, they're still working to improve critical capabilities such as intelligence, logistics, aviation, and command and control. At the same time, the Taliban remains a threat. They have gained ground in some cases. They've continued attacks and suicide bombings, including in Kabul. Because the Taliban deliberately target innocent civilians, more Afghan men, women, and children are dying. And often overlooked in the global refugee crisis, millions of Afghans have fled their homes and many have been fleeing their country.

Now, as President and Commander in Chief, I've made it clear that I will not allow Afghanistan to be used as safe haven for terrorists to attack our Nation again. That's why I constantly review our strategy with my national security team, including our commanders in Afghanistan. In all these reviews, we're guided by the facts—what's happening on the ground—to determine what's working and what needs to be changed. And that's why, at times, I've made adjustments, for example, by slowing the drawdown of our forces and, more recently, by giving U.S. forces more flexibility to support Afghan forces on the ground and in the air. And I strongly believe that it is in our national security interest—especially after all the blood and treasure we've invested in Afghanistan over the years—that we give our Afghan partners the very best opportunity to succeed.

Upon taking command of coalition forces this spring, General Nicholson conducted a review of the security situation in Afghanistan and our military posture. It was good to get a fresh set of eyes. And based on the recommendation of General Nicholson, as well as Secretary Carter and Chairman Dunford, and following extensive consultations with my national security team, as well as Congress and the Afghan Government and our international partners, I'm announcing an additional adjustment to our posture.

Instead of going down to 5,500 troops by the end of this year, the United States will maintain approximately 8,400 troops in Afghanistan into next year, through the end of my administration. The narrow missions assigned to our forces will not change. They remain focused on supporting Afghan forces and going after terrorists. But maintaining our forces at this specific level, based on our assessment of the security conditions and the strength of Afghan

forces, will allow us to continue to provide tailored support to help Afghan forces continue to improve. From coalition bases in Jalalabad and Kandahar, we'll be able to continue supporting Afghan forces on the ground and in the air. And we continue supporting critical counterterrorism operations.

Now, in reaffirming the enduring commitment of the United States to Afghanistan and its people, the decision I'm making today can help our allies and partners align their own commitments. As you know, tomorrow I depart for the NATO summit in Warsaw, where I'll meet with our coalition partners and Afghan President Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah. Many of our allies and partners have already stepped forward with commitments of troops and funding so that we can keep strengthening Afghan forces through the end of this decade. The NATO summit will be an opportunity for more allies and partners to affirm their contributions, and I'm confident they will, because all of us have a vital interest in the security and stability of Afghanistan.

My decision today also sends a message to the Taliban and all those who have opposed Afghanistan's progress. You have now been waging war against the Afghan people for many years. You've been unable to prevail. Afghan security forces continue to grow stronger. And the commitment of the international community, including the United States, to Afghanistan and its people will endure. I will say it again: The only way to end this conflict and to achieve a full drawdown of foreign forces from Afghanistan is through a lasting political settlement between the Afghan Government and the Taliban. That's the only way. And that is why the United States will continue to strongly support an Afghan-led reconciliation process and why we call on all countries in the region to end safe havens for militants and terrorists.

Finally, today's decision best positions my successor to make future decisions about our presence in Afghanistan. In January, the next U.S. President will assume the most solemn responsibility of the Commander in Chief: the security of the United States and the safety of the American people. The decision I'm making today ensures that my successor has a solid foundation for continued progress in Afghanistan as well as the flexibility to address the threat of terrorism as it evolves.

So, in closing, I want to address directly what I know is on the minds of many Americans, especially our troops and their families who have borne a heavy burden for our security. When we first sent our forces into Afghanistan 14 years ago, few Americans imagined we'd be there—in any capacity—this long. As President, I focused our strategy on training and building up Afghan forces. It has been continually my belief that it is up to Afghans to defend their country. Because we have emphasized training their capabilities, we've been able to end our major ground war there and bring 90 percent of our troops back home.

But even as we work for peace, we have to deal with the realities of the world as it is. And we can't forget what's at stake in Afghanistan. This is where Al Qaida is trying to regroup. This is where ISIL continues to try to expand its presence. If these terrorists succeed in regaining areas and camps where they can train and plot, they will attempt more attacks against us. And we cannot allow that to happen. I will not allow that to happen.

This September will mark 15 years since the attacks of 9/11. And once more, we'll pause to remember the lives we lost, Americans and peoples from around the world. We'll stand with their families, who still grieve. We'll stand with survivors, who still bear the scars of that day. We'll thank the first responders who rushed to save others. And perhaps most importantly, we'll salute our men and women in uniform—our 9/11 generation—who have served in Afghanistan and beyond for our security. We'll honor the memory of all those who've made the ultimate sacrifice, including more than 2,200 American patriots who have given their lives in Afghanistan. As we do, let's never forget the progress their service has made possible.

Afghanistan is not a perfect place. It remains one of the poorest countries in the world. It is going to continue to take time for them to build up military capacity that we sometimes

take for granted. And given the enormous challenges they face, the Afghan people will need the partnership of the world, led by the United States, for many years to come. But with our support, Afghanistan is a better place than it once was. Millions of Afghan children—boys and girls—are in school. Dramatic improvements in public health have saved the lives of mothers and children. Afghans have cast their ballots in democratic elections and seen the first democratic transfer of power in their country's history. The current National Unity Government continues to pursue reforms—including record revenues last year—to strengthen their country and, over time, help decrease the need for international support.

That Government is a strong partner with us in combating terrorism. That's the progress we've helped make possible. That's the progress that our troops have helped make possible, and our diplomats and our development personnel. That's the progress we can help sustain, in partnership with the Afghan people and our coalition partners. And so I firmly believe the decision I'm announcing today is the right thing to do: for Afghanistan, for the United States, and for the world.

May God bless our troops and all who serve to protect us. May God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:27 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. John W. Nicholson, Jr., USA, commander, U.S. Forces Afghanistan; and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., USMC. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Statement on the Observance of Eid al-Fitr
July 6, 2016

Upon the arrival of a new crescent Moon, Michelle and I send our warmest greetings to all those celebrating Eid al-Fitr in the United States and around the globe. For Muslim Americans, Eid is an opportunity to reflect on the 30 days spent fasting and to recommit to values of gratitude, compassion, and generosity. In neighborhoods and homes across the world, this special occasion begins in the early hours of the day when families dress in their finest attire in preparation for prayers and festivities. Homes are decorated with ornaments and lanterns. Gifts are wrapped and envelopes of money are prepared for kids. Above all, Eid is a time to gather and celebrate with loved ones.

Muslim Americans are as diverse as our Nation itself: Black, White, Latino, Asian, and Arab. Eid celebrations around the country remind us of our proud history as a nation built by people of all backgrounds, our history of religious freedom and civil liberties, and our history of innovation and strength. These legacies would not be possible without the contributions of Muslim Americans that make our country even stronger.

This past month, our country and the world endured challenges and senseless violence that broke our hearts and tried our souls. Our prayers are with the hundreds of innocent lives—many of them Muslim—taken during the month of Ramadan in places like Orlando, Istanbul, Dhaka, Baghdad, and Medina.

Here at home, we've also seen a rise in attacks against Muslim Americans. No one should ever feel afraid or unsafe in their place of worship. Many Americans have shared in the experience of Ramadan by volunteering in community service efforts to assist those in need and even fasting a few days with their fellow Muslim American coworkers. In the face of hate, it's our American values and strength that bring us together to stand in solidarity and protect one another, thereby, making our Nation stronger and safer.

Muslim Americans have been part of our American family since its founding. This Eid, we recommit to protecting Muslim Americans against bigotry and xenophobia, while

celebrating the contributions of Muslim Americans around the country, including one of our finest, the People's Champion, Muhammad Ali, to whom we bade farewell this Ramadan. Later this month, Michelle and I will host an Eid celebration at the White House, and we look forward to welcoming Americans from around the country to celebrate the holiday. From our family to yours, *Eid Mubarak*.

Statement on Congressional Passage of the Global Food Security Act of 2016
July 6, 2016

Seven years ago, just a few months into my Presidency, I came together with counterparts from some of the world's most powerful nations and committed to improving the lives of rural poor people around the globe through investments in more productive agriculture and better nutrition. Today I'm proud to see that Congress has passed S. 1252, the Global Food Security Act of 2016, an overwhelmingly bipartisan piece of legislation that will put Feed the Future, our global hunger and food security initiative, into law.

I want to thank the co-sponsors of the legislation, Senators Isakson and Casey and Representatives Smith and McCollum, for their steadfast commitment to strengthening global food security, and also recognize the leaders of the Foreign Affairs and Agriculture Committees for their extraordinary leadership to ensure that these efforts are enduring.

This game-changing development initiative—the first of my administration—has helped increase economic growth and stem the tide of global hunger, poverty, and malnutrition over the span of just a few years. While we've already accomplished so much through this collaborative global partnership, I know that with the continued effort and support that this legislation provides, we can achieve what was just a few years ago the unimaginable: We can end global poverty and hunger within our lifetimes.

NOTE: The statement referred to Rep. Christopher H. Smith.

Remarks on the Deaths of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile From Warsaw, Poland
July 8, 2016

Good evening, everybody.

I know we've been on a long flight, but given the extraordinary interest in the shootings that took place in Louisiana and Minnesota, I thought it would be important for me to address all of you directly. And I want to begin by expressing my condolences for the families of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile.

As I said in the statement that I posted on Facebook, we have seen tragedies like this too many times. The Justice Department, I know, has opened a civil rights investigation in Baton Rouge. The Governor of Minnesota, I understand, is calling for an investigation there as well. As is my practice, given my institutional role, I can't comment on the specific facts of these cases, and I have full confidence in the Justice Department's ability to conduct a thorough and fair inquiry.

But what I can say is that all of us as Americans should be troubled by these shootings, because these are not isolated incidents. They're symptomatic of a broader set of racial disparities that exist in our criminal justice system. And I just want to give people a few statistics to try to put in context why emotions are so raw around these issues.

According to various studies—not just one, but a wide range of studies that have been carried out over a number of years—African Americans are 30-percent more likely than Whites to be pulled over. After being pulled

over, African Americans and Hispanics are three times more likely to be searched. Last year, African Americans were shot by police at more than twice the rate of Whites. African Americans are arrested at twice the rate of Whites. African American defendants are 75-percent more likely to be charged with offenses carrying mandatory minimums. They receive sentences that are almost 10-percent longer than comparable Whites arrested for the same crime. So that if you add it all up, the African American and Hispanic population, who make up only 30 percent of the general population, make up more than half of the incarcerated population.

Now, these are facts. And when incidents like this occur, there's a big chunk of our fellow citizenry that feels as if, because of the color of their skin, they are not being treated the same. And that hurts. And that should trouble all of us. This is not just a Black issue. It's not just a Hispanic issue. This is an American issue that we should all care about. All fairminded people should be concerned.

Now, let me just say, we have extraordinary appreciation and respect for the vast majority of police officers who put their lives on the line to protect us every single day. They've got a dangerous job. It is a tough job. And as I've said before, they have a right to go home to their families, just like anybody else on the job. And there are going to be circumstances in which they've got to make split-second decisions. We understand that.

But when we see data that indicates disparities in how African Americans and Latinos may be treated in various jurisdictions around the country, then it's incumbent on all of us to say, we can do better than this, we are better than this, and to not have it degenerate into the usual political scrum. We should be able to step back, reflect, and ask ourselves, what can we do better so that everybody feels as if they're equal under the law?

Now, the good news is, is that there are practices we can institute that will make a difference. Last year, we put together a Task Force that was comprised of civil rights activists and community leaders, but also law enforcement officials: police captains, sheriffs. And they sat around a table, and they looked at the data, and they looked at best practices, and they came up with specific recommendations and steps that could ensure that the trust between communities and police departments were rebuilt and incidents like this would be less likely to occur.

And there are some jurisdictions out there that have adopted these recommendations. But there are a whole bunch that have not. And if anything good comes out of these tragedies, my hope is, is that communities around the country take a look and say, how can we implement these recommendations, and that the overwhelming majority of police officers who are doing a great job every single day and are doing their job without regard to race, that they encourage their leadership and organizations that represent them to get behind these recommendations.

Because ultimately, if you can rebuild trust between communities and the police departments that serve them, that helps us solve crime problems. That will make life easier for police officers. They will have more cooperation. They will be safer. They will be more likely to come home. So it would be good for crime fighting, and it will avert tragedy.

And I'm encouraged by the fact that the majority of leadership in police departments around the country recognize this. But change has been too slow, and we have to have a greater sense of urgency about this.

I'm also encouraged, by the way, that we have bipartisan support for criminal justice reform working its way through Congress. It has stalled and lost some momentum over the last couple of months, in part because Congress is having difficulty, generally, moving legislation forward, and we're in a political season. But there are people of good will on the Republican side and the Democratic side who I've seen want to try to get something done here. That, too, would help provide greater assurance across the country that those in power, those in authority, are taking these issues seriously. So this should be a spur to action to get that done, to get that across the finish line. Be-

cause I know there are a lot of people who want to get it done.

Now, let me just make a couple of final comments. I mentioned in my Facebook statement that I hope we don't fall into the typical patterns that occur after these kinds of incidents occur, where right away, there's a lot of political rhetoric, and it starts dividing people instead of bringing folks together. To be concerned about these issues is not to be against law enforcement. There are times when these incidents occur and you see protests and you see vigils. And I get letters—well-meaning letters sometimes—from law enforcement saying, how come we're under attack? How come not as much emphasis is made when police officers are shot?

And so, to all of law enforcement, I want to be very clear: We know you have a tough job. We mourn those in uniform who are protecting us who lose their lives. On a regular basis, I have joined with families in front of Capitol Hill to commemorate the incredible heroism that they've displayed. I've hugged family members who've lost loved ones doing the right thing. I know how much it hurts. On a regular basis, we bring in those who've done heroic work in law enforcement and have survived. Sometimes, they've been injured. Sometimes, they've risked their lives in remarkable ways. And we applaud them and appreciate them, because they're doing a really tough job really well.

There is no contradiction between us supporting law enforcement—making sure they've got the equipment they need, making sure that their collective bargaining rights are recognized, making sure that they're adequately staffed, making sure that they are respected, making sure their families are supported—and also saying that there are problems across our criminal justice system; there are biases, some conscious and unconscious, that have to be rooted out. That's not an attack on law enforcement, that is reflective of the values that the vast majority of law enforcement bring to the job.

But I repeat: If communities are mistrustful of the police, that makes those law enforcement officers who are doing a great job and are doing the right thing, it makes their lives harder. So, when people say, "Black Lives Matter," that doesn't mean blue lives don't matter, it just means all lives matter, but right now the big concern is the fact that the data shows Black folks are more vulnerable to these kinds of incidents.

This isn't a matter of us comparing the value of lives, this is recognizing that there is a particular burden that is being placed on a group of our fellow citizens. And we should care about that. And we can't dismiss it. We can't dismiss it.

So let me just end by saying, I actually, genuinely, truly believe that the vast majority of American people see this as a problem that we should all care about. And I would just ask those who question the sincerity or the legitimacy of protests and vigils and expressions of outrage, who somehow label those expressions of outrage as, quote, unquote, "political correctness," I'd just ask folks to step back and think, what if this happened to somebody in your family? How would you feel?

To be concerned about these issues is not political correctness, it's just being American and wanting to live up to our best and highest ideals. And it's to recognize the reality that we've got some tough history and we haven't gotten through all of that history yet. And we don't expect that in my lifetime, maybe not in my children's lifetime, that all the vestiges of that past will have been cured, will have been solved, but we can do better. People of good will can do better.

And doing better involves not just addressing potential bias in the criminal justice system. It's recognizing that too often we're asking police to man the barricades in communities that have been forgotten by all of us for way too long, in terms of substandard schools and inadequate jobs and a lack of opportunity. We've got to tackle those things. We can do better. And I believe we will do better.

All right. Thanks very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:42 a.m. at the Warsaw Marriott Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Mark B. Dayton of Minnesota.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Donald Franciszek Tusk of the European Council and President Jean-Claude Juncker of the European Commission in Warsaw

July 8, 2016

President Obama. Good morning, everybody. Let me begin by thanking Presidents Tusk and Juncker for the opportunity to meet today.

Shooting of Law Enforcement Officers in Dallas, Texas

With your understanding, I want to begin with a few words about the situation back in the United States, specifically the situation in Dallas, Texas.

My team has been keeping me updated throughout the morning, the evening in Dallas. I spoke this morning with Mayor Rawlings of Dallas to convey the deepest condolences of the American people. I told him that the Federal Government will provide whatever assistance Dallas may need as it deals with this tremendous tragedy.

We still don't know all the facts. What we do know is that there has been a vicious, calculated, and despicable attack on law enforcement. Police in Dallas were on duty, during—doing their jobs, keeping people safe during peaceful protests. These law enforcement officers were targeted, and nearly a dozen officers were shot. Five were killed. Other officers and at least one civilian were wounded, some are in serious condition, and we are praying for their recovery.

As I told Mayor Rawlings, I believe that I speak for every single American when I say that we are horrified over these events and that we stand united with the people and the police department in Dallas. According to police, there are multiple suspects. We will learn more, undoubtedly, about their twisted motivations. But let's be clear: There is no possible justification for these kinds of attacks or any violence against law enforcement. The FBI is already in touch with the Dallas police, and anyone involved in these senseless murders will be held fully accountable. Justice will be done.

I will have more to say about this as the facts become more clear. For now, let me just say that even as yesterday I spoke about our need to be concerned, as all Americans, about racial disparities in our criminal justice system, I also said yesterday that our police have an extraordinarily difficult job and the vast majority of them do their job in outstanding fashion. I also indicated the degree to which we need to be supportive of those officers who do their job each and every day, protecting us and protecting our communities.

Today is a wrenching reminder of the sacrifices that they make for us. We also know that when people are armed with powerful weapons, unfortunately, it makes attacks like these more deadly and more tragic. And in the days ahead, we're going to have to consider those realities as well.

In the meantime, today our focus is on the victims and their families. They are heartbroken. The entire city of Dallas is grieving. Police across America, which is a tight-knit family, feels this loss to their core. And we're grieving with them. I'd ask all Americans to say a prayer for these officers and their families. Keep them in their—in your thoughts. And as a nation, let's remember to express our profound gratitude to our men and women in blue, not just today, but every day.

European Union-U.S. Relations

With that, I want to thank Presidents Tusk and Juncker for our work here today in Warsaw. I've worked with Donald in his previous capacity as Prime Minister here in Poland, and I've appreciated this chance to work with Jean-Claude.

Our meeting comes, as I think everybody is aware, at a critical moment for the European Union. The vote in the United Kingdom to leave the EU has created uncertainty about the future of European integration. And unfortu-

nately, this has led some to suggest that the entire edifice of European security and prosperity is crumbling. There are those who have been questioning what does this mean for the transatlantic relationship. Let me just say, as is often the case in moments of change, this kind of hyperbole is misplaced. I want to take the opportunity to reaffirm some basic points that bear repeating.

First, based on my recent discussions with Prime Minister Cameron, Chancellor Merkel, and now here today, I am absolutely confident that the U.K. and the European Union will work together in a pragmatic and cooperative fashion to ensure that the U.K.'s transition is orderly and smooth. No one has an interest in protracted, adversarial negotiations. Everybody has an interest in minimizing any disruptions as the U.K. and the EU forge a new relationship.

Second, even as we face the difficulties of this moment, we cannot lose sight of the extraordinary achievement that European integration continues to be: more than 500 million people speaking 24 different official languages in more than two dozen countries, 19 with a common currency. Every member of the EU is a democracy. No EU country has ever raised arms against another. An integrated Europe is one of the greatest political and economic achievements of modern times, and this is an achievement that has to be preserved.

Third, and for all the reasons I just mentioned, the United States has a strong and enduring interest in a united, democratic Europe. We're bound together by ties of history, family and our common values: our commitment to democracy, pluralism, human dignity. Our economies are deeply woven together, with the largest trade and investment relationship in the world. The security of America and Europe is indivisible, and that's why, for nearly 70 years, the United States has been a staunch champion of European integration, and we will remain so.

Fourth, given our shared interests, Europe will remain a cornerstone of America's engagement with the world. European countries are and will remain among our closest allies and friends, and Europe is an indispensable partner around the globe. Indeed, even as we manage the implications of Brexit, our work today shows that we're going to continue to be focused on pressing global challenges.

We agree that the United States and the EU can do more together for our shared security. And we'll keep working to provide each other information to stem the flow of foreign terrorist fighters and prevent terrorist attacks, and we will do so in a way that continues to protect privacy and civil liberties. As the global coalition pushes ISIL back on the ground in Syria and Iraq, the EU has pledged critical financial assistance to help shore up the Iraqi economy and stabilize liberated communities. And as NATO nations affirm their commitment to Afghanistan's security, I want to commend, once again, the EU for taking the lead in mobilizing international assistance for development in Afghanistan.

Here in Europe, we'll continue to support Ukraine as it undertakes important political and economic reforms. The U.S. and EU are united in our commitment to maintaining sanctions on Russia until they fully implement its obligations under the Minsk agreement. And with President Tusk and Juncker set to attend today's North Atlantic Council meeting, we have an opportunity to deepen security cooperation between NATO and the EU.

We also agree that, on both sides of the Atlantic, we have to address economic frustrations and anxieties of many of our people, feelings that undoubtedly contributed to the Brexit vote, fears that they're leaving—being left behind by globalization and economic integration. Our governments, including the EU, cannot be remote institutions; they have to be responsive and move more quickly, with minimal bureaucracy, to deliver real economic progress in the lives of ordinary people.

And particularly, we discussed the importance of public investments—like infrastructure, education, innovation, and security—to stimulate growth and job training to help reduce inequality and unemployment, especially for young people here in Europe. That's been the right thing to do for years, both for the long

term and the short term. But at a time when heightened uncertainty in the global economy is potentially amplifying the headwinds that we all face, these policies make even more sense today.

We're going to keep working to help Europe enhance its energy security with more diverse and resilient supplies, including from the United States. And while we are mindful of the challenges, we are going to continue to pursue a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, or T–TIP, to help sustain jobs and growth in all of our countries and to help reinforce the larger transatlantic relationship.

And finally, we're stepping up to cooperate on global challenges. And I want to take this opportunity to commend the EU for the generosity and compassion that so many EU countries have shown desperate migrants—men, women, and children—who have fled to Europe. We believe NATO can do more to support EU naval operations in the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas to prevent the exploitation of migrants. I expect the EU to play a major role at our refugee summit this fall at the United Nations, where we aim to secure new contributions to address the global refugee crisis.

And with respect to the threat of climate change, we look forward to all EU countries ratifying the Paris Agreement and to the EU joining it. We continue to see EU—the EU as one of our strongest partners in reducing emissions, phasing out dangerous HFCs, and investing in clean energy.

So, again, I want to thank Donald and Jean-Claude for our work together. Despite the challenge of this moment, I'm pleased to see that the United States and the EU continue to deepen our partnership. The world needs a strong, prosperous, democratic, and united Europe. And in that cause, you will always have a strong and steady partner in the United States of America.

Thank you very much.

President Tusk. Before anything else, I want to say that I am deeply sorry about what has happened in Dallas. We are with you in this, as well as with the families and loved ones of the victims. And sorry again.

This is my third and also my last meeting in Warsaw with Barack Obama as President of the United States of America. But I believe we will see each other again here in Poland, perhaps in less official roles. And, Barack, you know that you will always be here a most welcome guest. You know that, I'm sure.

Over many years, we have worked together to strengthen the relation between Europe and the United States. Today, the need for such effort is even more visible. I remember 27 years ago, it was in my hometown of Gdansk, members of—when members of Solidarity welcomed George Bush Senior outside of the famous gate of the Gdansk shipyards. And we were chanting, *"Nie ma wolnosci bez solidarnosci,"* which means, "There is no freedom without solidarity." We already knew then that our newly gained freedom would require defense and guarantees, which, in a global dimension, implied the closest possible cooperation between Europe and the United States.

Today we can repeat that phrase with only a small change; it has preserved its meaning. There is no freedom in Europe without Atlantic solidarity. Caring for the unity of the whole political community of the West is key. Whether we are discussing the referendum in the United Kingdom, the situation in Ukraine, or our future trade deals, we realize how much effort and how many new arguments we need to prevent political entropy and disintegration.

We know that the geopolitical consequences of Brexit may be very serious. Maintaining the closest possible relations between the EU and the U.K. is in European and American interest. But it is equally important to send today a strong message to the whole world that Brexit, as sad and meaningful as it is, is just an incident and not the beginning of a process. And to all our opponents, on the inside and out, who are hoping for a sequel to Brexit, I want to say loud and clear, you won't see on the screen the words "To be continued."

There's no good alternative to transatlantic cooperation. All those who value our fundamental principles of freedom, the rule of law, democracy, human and civil rights must act in favor of this cooperation. This is the essence of

our ties between America, known as the New World, and Europe, known as the Old Continent. We know, however, that besides the old world and the new world, there's also a world apart, with different values and different strategic ends. And it has allies also in the U.S.A., in Europe, and here in Poland.

In public debates in Washington, London, Berlin, Paris, and Warsaw, we hear antidemocratic slogans more and more, calling for national egoism, isolationism, Euroscepticism. It would be good if we clearly stated today that whoever turns against America harms Europe. Whoever attacks the European Union harms America. And whoever undermines the foundations of liberal democracy harms one and the other.

We have been building liberal democracy with determination on both sides of the Atlantic. We have followed the lessons of the same scholars. We have been inspired by the same political philosophies. We must now protect this heritage, both rich and, indeed, surprisingly fresh. What comes to my mind on this occasion is a quote by Thomas Jefferson, the third President of the United States of America: "In questions of powers, then, let no more be heard of confidence in man, but bind him down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution."

Thank you.

President Juncker. Yes. Good morning. I would like to express my sympathy to the President of the United States and to the people of this great nation for the tragic events which happened yesterday night in Dallas, Texas. These events, like others, are proving and showing that we are living in a world which is developing increasingly to more complexity and to more uncertainty. The threats to our security takes many forms, and they are not located in any one place.

Therefore, our first duty is to show unity and reaffirm the values we share: human rights, freedom, democracy, and the keystone on which the other rests, the rule of law. They go to the core of the Euro-Atlantic Alliance, and they make us who we are, and they do guarantee our way of life.

The United States, NATO, and European Union are central pillars of the global order. We complement each other and together provide peace and stability in Europe, our neighborhood, and beyond. Our combined strength remains formidable, but still, we can work more closely together, and that is why we are here today.

We were discussing, in the course of this morning's meeting, the consequences entailed by the vote of the British people to leave the European Union. I would like to repeat here what we have said in Brussels the other day, that we cannot start negotiations until the British authorities will not have notified, under the regime of article 50, their intention to leave the European Union. But then, we have to engage in negotiations. And I'm not doing this, how could I say, in hostile mood. I do think that, even after the referendum, the European Union and the United Kingdom share a community of interests, not only in the defense and the military sector, but in all the relevant sectors of international life, mainly as far as trade is concerned.

But if a country wants to have a free access to the entire market, it's for sure that this country has to respect the four basic freedoms, including the one of the freedom of movement for workers. But we'll have these negotiations with our British friends. And I do think that it's in our interest and in the global interest to keep Britain as a strong ally anyway in NATO and as a strong partner when it comes to the relations of this then third country with the European Union.

As time is running out, Barack, I will stop here, not without having said that we were discussing the T–TIP issue and that we want to conclude these negotiations before the end of this year, as—mainly as far as the big blocks of this negotiation are concerned. You will ask the European Council, I was asking leaders one after the other if yes or no, the European Union should continue to negotiate, and we received once again the mandate to conclude these negotiations.

Thanks so much, also for what—for your leadership during the last years. Thank you, Barack.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:19 a.m. in Baltic Ballroom No. 3 at the Warsaw Marriott Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Lorne Ahrens, Michael Krol, Michael J. Smith, and Patrick Zamarripa, Dallas Police Department officers, and Brent Thompson, Dallas Area Rapid Transit Police officer, who were killed in the shooting at a public demonstration in Dallas, TX, on July 7; Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom; and Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. President Tusk referred to former U.S. President George H.W. Bush.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Andrzej Duda of Poland in Warsaw

July 8, 2016

President Duda. Excellency, Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much that in my capacity as President of the Republic of Poland, I can welcome the President of the United States, Mr. Barack Obama, to Warsaw, to NATO summit. It is my great pleasure because I hope that this summit will have a historic character and historic dimension.

In both meetings, on the one hand, as regards the demonstration of the unity, coherence, and solidarity within the North Atlantic Alliance, among its member states, indivisibility and security within NATO. Also, the unity as regards territorial security that we are speaking with one voice, that we are together. But on the other hand, this summit is significant as regards the construction of an ever-more strategic and robust partnership between Poland and the United States.

This partnership is there; this partnership is materializing both in the economic dimension, where cooperation is going smoothly, but recently, it has also materialized as regards military cooperation: in other words, joint construction of the security zone. And for that, we are grateful to Mr. President and the United States. We are grateful for their friendliness. We are also grateful for the understanding that security is there where the strongest armed forces in the world are present. And the strongest armed forces of the world is the Armed Forces of the United States, as we all know.

And that is why we welcomed American troops to the Anaconda exercise. We were hugely pleased that they were so numerous. We are also happy that a heavy brigade of the United States will be operating in the territory of Poland. We are pleased that the United States is providing such a decisive support to this reinforcement of the military potential of the North Atlantic Alliance. In our part of Europe, in Central Europe, about which we are saying that it is the eastern flank of NATO. So thank you for all those actions.

We had a very good conversation with Mr. President. Thank you, Mr. President, for accepting my condolences, because although we are busy, working people, nevertheless, the tragic information on what happened in Dallas, of course, has reached Poland as well. And on to the hands of Mr. President, I expressed my condolences for the American nation. But first and foremost, I want to express those condolences to the families of the police officers who died on duty. And these significant—the ethos of duty is very strong in the United States. It is an element of the great patriotism. And I had this opportunity to see that myself when I talked to American commanders and to American troops during Anaconda exercise. So, Mr. President, once again, please accept my words of sympathy and condolences. Unfortunately, this is what happens in life. At times, such tragedies happen.

Ladies and gentlemen, myself and Mr. President discussed a wide range of topic. We touched upon all the important issues. We discussed Brexit. I'm happy that Mr. President

has got a very clear position, namely that the U.K. will keep its position within the North Atlantic Alliance, because this is a crucial country and our extremely important partner. We would like that partner to strengthen their potential.

We also discussed the issue of migration. I told Mr. President that we are supporting in the spirit of solidarity the actions of the allied armed forces also in the South by deploying our troops there, a Polish F–16 aircraft and Kościuszko brigade. We had a very good conversation. Thank you very much, Mr. President, for that.

There is still a lot of work ahead of us at this summit today, some hard work. But I believe, as I have already said, that this summit is going to be symbolic in nature. It is going to further strengthen our strategic partnership. Polish people like America. Polish people like Americans. And we are hugely pleased with your presence here in Warsaw, Mr. President, both today and tomorrow.

Thank you.

President Obama. Well, *dzien dobry.* Thank you, President Duda, for welcoming me today. This is my third visit to Poland as President. I've got very fond memories of my visit here 2 years ago when I joined Poles in Castle Square to celebrate a quarter century of Polish freedom. And it's wonderful to be back. As always, I bring greetings and friendship of the American people, especially the many proud Polish Americans, many of whom live in my hometown of Chicago.

We're here, of course, for the NATO summit, and the fact that it's being held here in Warsaw is a testament to Polish leadership. In the United States, we consider Poland one of our most committed and important allies. Poland is a leader in NATO as one of the nations that pays its full share—2 percent of GDP—for our collective security. Poland supports alliance missions, including in Afghanistan, and I thank Poland for its new contributions to the campaign against ISIL: F–16 aircraft and special forces trainers. And Poland has stepped forward as host of interceptor sites for our defense system against ballistic missiles from countries like Iran and as a linchpin in the defense of NATO's eastern flank.

Here in Warsaw, I want to once again affirm the enduring commitment of the United States to the security of Poland. As treaty allies, we have a solemn, binding article 5 duty to defend each other. And in this obligation, we will never waver. These are not just words, they are backed up by deeds. When I first came here 5 years ago, I promised to increase our commitment to Poland's security, and that's exactly what we've done. We have kept our promise.

We now have a continuous presence of U.S. troops in Poland with our aviation detachment at Lask Air Base. We continuously rotate personnel and aircraft into Poland. Under the European Reassurance Initiative that I announced here 2 years ago, we've increased training, exercises, and readiness. Earlier this year, I announced a four-fold increase to this effort, proposing $3.4 billion to preposition more U.S. heavy equipment in this region and to continuously rotate an armored brigade in Europe.

Today I'm announcing further steps to bolster NATO's defense and deterrence posture. As the alliance prepares to enhance our forward presence in Central and Eastern Europe, I can announce that the United States will be the lead nation for the U.S.—for the NATO enhanced presence here in Poland. And that means the United States will deploy a battalion—roughly 1,000 American soldiers—here, in Poland, on a rotational basis to serve shoulder to shoulder with Polish soldiers.

In addition, when the new U.S. armored brigade begins rotating through Europe early next year, its headquarters will be here in Poland. In other words, Poland is going to be seeing an increase in NATO and American personnel and the most modern, capable military equipment, because we will meet our article 5 obligations to our common defense.

More broadly, I want to thank Poland for its continued strong support for Ukraine's efforts to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity in the face of Russian aggression. We discussed the importance of continuing to provide Ukraine with the assistance it needs to

strengthen its military and to pursue political and economic reforms. And we fully support the efforts led by Germany and France to resolve the conflict in eastern Ukraine diplomatically. And the United States and Poland are united in insisting that sanctions remain in place until Russia fully meets its obligations under the Minsk agreement.

On the economic front, our two countries will continue to work together to enhance Poland's energy security. Poland recently opened new terminals to receive liquefied natural gas, and the President was describing in detail the plans involved in these facilities. This is going to help diversify Poland's energy supply. American companies are investing their high-tech expertise in wind and solar to help Poland harness more renewable energy. And we'll continue to deepen our cooperation as we pursue a cleaner, more sustainable energy future together.

And finally, I want to congratulate Poland on recently celebrating the 225th anniversary of its Constitution, the oldest written Constitution in Europe. And this speaks to the long yearning of the Polish people for freedom and independence. Indeed, after the cold war, the rebirth of Polish democracy was an inspiration to people across Europe and around the world, including in America. Because Poland's progress shows that democracy and pluralism are not unique to any one of our cultures or countries, they are describing universal values. And a central tenet of American foreign policy is that we speak up for these values around the world, even with our closest allies.

And it's in that spirit that I expressed to President Duda our concerns over certain actions and the impasse around the Poland's Constitutional Tribunal. I insisted that we are very respectful of Poland's sovereignty, and I recognize that Parliament is working on legislation to take some important steps, but more work needs to be done. And as our—as your friend and ally, we've urged all parties to work together to sustain Poland's democratic institutions. That's what make us democracies: not just by the words written in constitutions or in the fact that we vote in elections, but the institutions we depend upon every day, such as rule of law, independent judiciaries, and a free press. And these are, I know, values that the President cares about. These are values that are at the heart of our alliance, which was founded, in the words of the North Atlantic Treaty, "on the principles of democracy, individual liberty, and rule of law."

And when I think of all the progress that we celebrated 2 years ago in Castle Square—all the odds that the people of Poland have overcome throughout history and how the Solidarity movement helped defeat communism, the freedom that the Poles have won—it makes me confident in the future of Polish democracy and the fact that Poland stands and needs to continue stand as an example for democratic practices around the world. With the new commitments that I'm announcing today, the people of Poland and our allies across the region can remain confident that NATO will stand with you, shoulder to shoulder, no matter what, today and always.

So, again, Mr. President, thank you for your hospitality. Thank you to the Polish people. I know that it's a lot of work to prepare for these summits, but I can tell that you've done an outstanding job, and I'm sure it will be a great success.

So *dziekuje bardzo,* President Duda.

President Duda. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 2:20 p.m. in the main press briefing room at the PGE National Stadium. In his remarks, he referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. President Duda referred to Lorne Ahrens, Michael Krol, Michael J. Smith, and Patrick Zamarripa, Dallas Police Department officers, and Brent Thompson, Dallas Area Rapid Transit Police officer, who were killed in the shooting at a public demonstration in Dallas, TX, on July 7. He also referred to the United Kingdom's June 23 referendum vote to leave the European Union. President Duda spoke in Polish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

The President's News Conference in Warsaw, Poland
July 9, 2016

The President. Good evening, everybody.

Once again, I want to thank the Government and the people of Poland for hosting this NATO summit. And I especially want to thank the people of Warsaw for their wonderful hospitality. It is my third visit to Poland. Each time, we have been received with tremendous friendship, and it signifies the close bonds between our two countries.

Shooting of Law Enforcement Officers in Dallas, Texas

I want to begin this press conference with events back home. This has been a tough week, first and foremost, for the families [of those]* who have been killed, but also for the entire American family. In my call yesterday to Attorney General Loretta Lynch, I stressed that the Justice Department and our Federal Government should continue to do everything that we can to assist the investigation in Dallas and to support the police and the city of Dallas as they deal with this tragedy.

In my call to Chief Brown, I commended him for showing outstanding leadership during an extremely challenging time and asked him to convey to all the officers and their families how the American people are grieving with them and that we stand with them.

I'll have the opportunity to convey our condolences and show our solidarity when I visit Dallas in a few days. But before I do, let me just make some very brief points. First of all, as painful as this week has been, I firmly believe that America is not as divided as some have suggested. Americans of all races and all backgrounds are rightly outraged by the inexcusable attacks on police, whether it's in Dallas or anyplace else.

That includes protesters. It includes family members who have grave concerns about police conduct, and they have said that this is unacceptable. There's no division there. And Americans of all races and all backgrounds are also rightly saddened and angered about the deaths of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile, and about the larger, persistent problem of African Americans and Latinos being treated differently in our criminal justice system.

So there is sorrow, there is anger, there is confusion about next steps. But there's unity in recognizing that this is not how we want our communities to operate. This is not who we want to be as Americans. And that serves as the basis for us being able to move forward in a constructive and positive way.

So we cannot let the actions of a few define all of us. The demented individual who carried out those attacks in Dallas, he's no more representative of African Americans than the shooter in Charleston was representative of White Americans or the shooter in Orlando or San Bernardino were representative of Muslim Americans. They don't speak for us. That's not who we are.

And one of the things that gives me hope this week is actually seeing how the overwhelming majority of Americans have reacted: with empathy and understanding. We've seen police continue to reach out to communities that they serve all across the country and show incredible professionalism as they're protecting protesters. We've seen activists and grassroots groups who have expressed concern about police shootings, but are also adamant in their support of the Dallas Police Department, which is particularly appropriate because the Dallas Police Department is a great example of a department that has taken the issue of police shootings seriously and has engaged in an approach that has not only brought down their murder rates, but also drastically reduced complaints around police misconduct.

That's the spirit that we all need to embrace. That's the spirit that I want to build on. It's one of the reasons why next week, using the Task Force that we had set up after Ferguson, but

* White House correction.

also building on it, and inviting both police and law enforcement and community activists and civil rights leaders, bringing them together to the White House. I want to start moving on constructive actions that are actually going to make a difference, because that is what all Americans want.

So, when we start suggesting that somehow there's this enormous polarization and we're back to the situation in the sixties, that's just not true. You're not seeing riots, and you're not seeing police going after people who are protesting peacefully. You've seen almost uniformly peaceful protests. And you've seen, uniformly, police handling those protests with professionalism.

And so, as tough, as hard, as depressing as the loss of life was this week, we've got a foundation to build on. We just have to have confidence that we can build on those better angels of our nature. And we have to make sure that all of us step back, do some reflection, and make sure that the rhetoric that we engage in is constructive and not destructive; that we're not painting anybody with an overly broad brush; that we're not constantly thinking the worst in other people rather than the best. If we do that, then I'm confident that we will continue to make progress.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Now, here in Europe, this is a pivotal moment for our alliance. In the nearly 70 years of NATO, perhaps never have we faced such a range of challenges all at once: security, humanitarian, political. NATO nations—the United States, Canada, France, Belgium, and Turkey—have endured heinous terrorist attacks directed or inspired by ISIL. Russia has violated the sovereignty and territorial integrity of an independent European nation—Ukraine—and engaged in provocative behavior toward NATO allies. European borders and economies have been tested by millions of migrants fleeing conflicts and depravation. And the vote in the United Kingdom to leave the EU has raised questions about the future of European integration.

In this challenging moment, I want to take this opportunity to state clearly what will never change, and that is the unwavering commitment of the United States to the security and defense of Europe, to our transatlantic relationship, to our commitment to our common defense.

And next year will mark the hundredth anniversary of the first American troops arriving on European soil in the First World War. And ever since, through two World Wars, a long cold war, and the decades since, generations of Americans have served here for our common security. In quiet cemeteries, from France to the Netherlands to Italy, Americans still rest where they fell. Even now more than 60,000 American military personnel serve in dozens of European countries.

And my point is this: In good times and in bad, Europe can count on the United States—always.

Now, here in Warsaw, we haven't simply reaffirmed our enduring article 5 obligations to our common security; we're moving forward with the most significant reinforcement of our collective defense any time since the cold war. First, we're strengthening NATO's defense and deterrence posture. Building on our European Reassurance Initiative—which has already increased readiness, from the Baltics to the Black Sea—our alliance will enhance our forward presence on our eastern flank.

As I announced yesterday, the United States will be the lead nation here in Poland, deploying a battalion of American soldiers. The United Kingdom will take the lead in Estonia, Germany in Lithuania, and Canada in Latvia. This will mean some 4,000 additional NATO troops, on a rotational basis, in this region. Moreover, the additional U.S. armored brigade will rotate through Europe, including an additional 4,000 U.S. troops. Meanwhile, to the south, we agreed on new deterrence measures in Romania and Bulgaria. So NATO is sending a clear message that we will defend every ally.

We're also strengthening the readiness of our forces against a range of threats. So NATO's Joint Task Force is now operational and can deploy anywhere in Europe on short

notice. With recent progress here in Poland, Romania, and Spain, NATO's ballistic missile defense is coming on line. And we're launching a new effort to boost the resilience of allies to better defend against new types of threats, including cyber attacks.

NATO is increasing our support to Ukraine. At our meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission, we agreed on a new assistance package to improve alliance support for Ukrainian forces. Prime Minister Cameron, President Hollande, Chancellor Merkel, Prime Minister Renzi, and I met with President Poroshenko, and we reaffirmed our strong support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as the need to continue political and economic reforms.

[*At this point, applause was heard from another room.*]

The President. Thank you. I'm already getting applause. [*Laughter*] I'm not even finished yet. [*Laughter*]

And even as the NATO-Russia Council will meet in Brussels next week, our 28 nations are united in our view that there can be no business as usual with Russia until it fully implements its Minsk obligations.

NATO will do more also to fight against terrorist networks. Every ally already contributes to the campaign against ISIL. Now, the alliance will contribute AWACS aircraft to improve our intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance against ISIL. NATO training of Iraqi security forces, currently run in Jordan, will move to Iraq, where they can be even more effective. And building on my decision to largely maintain the current U.S. troop presence in Afghanistan into next year, 39 nations, including the U.S., have committed more than 12,000 troops to NATO's training mission. And in addition, some 30 nations have pledged upwards of $900 million to help sustain Afghan forces, which is a very strong message of our enduring commitment to Afghanistan.

We're bolstering our efforts on NATO's southern flank. The alliance will increase our support to EU naval operations in the Mediterranean to stop arms traffickers and go after criminals that are exploiting desperate migrants. And we're going to do more to help partners from North Africa to the Middle East to Georgia strengthen their own defense capacity.

And finally, after many years, NATO has stopped the collective decline in defense spending. Over the past 2 years, most NATO members have halted cuts and begun investing more in defense. And this means defense spending across the alliance is now scheduled to increase. I especially want to commend our friends in the U.K., Poland, Greece, Estonia—all who, along with the United States, pay their full share of at least 2 percent of GDP for our collective defense. But for those of you doing the math, that means that the majority of allies are still not hitting that 2-percent mark, an obligation we agreed to in Wales. So we had a very candid conversation about this. There's a recognition that given the range of threats that we face and the capabilities that we need, everybody has got to step up, and everybody has got to do better.

So, in closing, I'd just note that this is my final NATO summit. Throughout my time in office, one of my top foreign policy priorities has been to strengthen our alliances, especially with NATO. And as I reflect on the past 8 years—both the progress and the challenges—I can say with confidence that we've delivered on that promise. The United States has increased our presence here in Europe. NATO is as strong, as nimble, and as ready as ever. And as we see from the presence of Montenegro at this summit, the door to NATO membership remains open to nations that can meet our high standards.

So nobody should ever doubt the resolve of this alliance to stay united and focused on the future. And just as our nations have stood together over the past hundred years, I know that we'll stay united and grow even stronger for another hundred more.

And with that, let me take some questions. I'm going to start with Kathleen Hennessey of AP.

Shooting of Law Enforcement Officers in Dallas, Texas/Gun Control

Q. Thanks, Mr. President. I wanted to specifically ask about the Dallas shooting and the attacker there. Now that we know more about the man who, we believe, did those crimes, I'm wondering if you could help us understand how you describe his motives. Do you consider this an act of domestic terrorism? Was this a hate crime? Was this a mentally ill man with a gun? How should Americans understand why that happened? And then, also, on the issue of political division and looking for solutions, there have been some critics who noted that you immediately mentioned your call for gun control soon after the attacks. Do you think that in any way encourages or ensures that people retreat to their corners as they think about this?

The President. Yes, first of all, I think it's very hard to untangle the motives of this shooter. As we've seen in a whole range of incidents with mass shooters, they are, by definition, troubled. By definition, if you shoot people who pose no threat to you—strangers—you have a troubled mind. What triggers that, what feeds it, what sets it off, I'll leave that to psychologists and people who study these kinds of incidents.

What I can say is that although he may have used as an excuse his anger about previous incidents—as has been indicated, at least, in the press, and as Chief Brown, I think, indicated—in no way does that represent what the overwhelming majority of Americans think.

Americans, to a large degree, want to make sure that we have a police force that is supported, because they know our police officers do a really tough, dangerous job. And witness the professionalism of our Dallas police officers. As they were being shot at, the fact that they helped to clear the area, they helped to get the fallen and the injured out of there, they were able to isolate the suspect, and that you didn't have other casualties as a consequence of the police shooting back—that just gives you an indication of what a tough job they have and how well they do it on a regular basis.

So I think the danger, as I said, is that we somehow suggest that the act of a troubled individual speaks to some larger political statement across the country. It doesn't. When some White kid walks into a church and shoots a bunch of worshippers who invite him to worship with them, we don't assume that somehow he's making a political statement that's relevant to the attitudes of the rest of America. And we shouldn't make those assumptions around a troubled Muslim individual who is acting on their own in that same way.

Now, with respect to the issue of guns, I am going to keep on talking about the fact that we cannot eliminate all racial tension in our country overnight; we are not going to be able to identify ahead of time and eliminate every madman or troubled individual who might want to do harm against innocent people; but we can make it harder for them to do so.

And if you look at the pattern of death and violence and shootings that we've experienced over the course of the last year or the last 5 years or the last 10 years—I've said this before—we are unique among advanced countries in the scale of violence that we experience. And I'm not just talking about mass shootings. I'm talking about the hundreds of people who have already been shot this year in my hometown of Chicago, the ones that we just consider routine.

Now, we may not see that issue as connected to what happened in Dallas, but part of what's creating tensions between communities and the police is the fact that police have a really difficult time in communities where they know guns are everywhere. And as I said before, they have a right to come home, and now they have very little margin of error in terms of making decisions. So if you care about the safety of our police officers, then you can't set aside the gun issue and pretend that that's irrelevant.

At the protest in Dallas, one of the challenges for the Dallas Police Department—as they're being shot at—is because this is an open-carry State, there are a bunch of people participating in the protest who have weapons on them. Imagine if you're a police officer and

you're trying to sort out who is shooting at you and there are a bunch of people who have got guns on them.

In Minneapolis, we don't know yet what happened, but we do know that there was a gun in the car that apparently was licensed, but it caused in some fashion those tragic events.

So no, we can't just ignore that and pretend that that's somehow political or the President is pushing his policy agenda. It is a contributing factor—not the sole factor, but a contributing factor—to the broader tensions that arise between police and the communities where they serve. And so we have to talk about that.

And as I've said before, there is a way to talk about that that is consistent with our Constitution and the Second Amendment. The problem is, even mention of it somehow evokes this kind of polarization.

And you're right, when it comes to the issue of gun safety, there is polarization between a very intense minority and a majority of Americans who actually think that we could be doing better when it comes to gun safety. But that expresses itself in stark terms when it comes to legislation in Congress or in State legislatures. And that's too bad. We're going to have to tackle that at some point. And I'm not going to stop talking about it, because if we don't talk about it, we're not going to solve these underlying problems. It's part of the problem.

Carol Lee [Wall Street Journal].

Terrorism/Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) Terrorist Organization/U.S. Crime Rates/Criminal Justice Reform

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You mentioned San Bernardino and Orlando. And Americans have been warned that similar attacks could happen here in the United, in the—over there in the United States. And obviously, what happened this week in Minnesota and Louisiana and Dallas—these are not necessarily the same types of attacks and the motivations may be different, but collectively, they're having a real impact on the American public in that there's a real anxiety out there, where people are genuinely afraid, going about their daily lives, doing routine things.

The President. Right.

Q. So my questions are, do you see any sort of common thread in these events? Is this sort of a—just a new normal? Is there anything that you can do about this? And what's your message to Americans who are genuinely afraid? Because the anxiety just seems to be getting worse, not better, and these attacks keep seeming to happen in much more regularity that wasn't a part of their experience even, say, a year ago.

The President. Well, Carol Lee, I do think we have to disentangle these issues. When it comes to terrorist attacks, people are understandably concerned not just because of what's happening in the United States, but what happened in Brussels and what's happened in Paris and what's happened in Turkey and what is consistently happening in Iraq and Bangladesh and all around the world. And that's why the work that we've done with NATO and our counter-ISIL coalition and other partners is so vital.

One of the things that's been commented on is that as ISIL loses territory and the fraud of the caliphate becomes more obvious, they are going to start resorting to more traditional terrorist tactics. They can't govern. They can't deliver anything meaningful to the people whose territory they can control. The one thing they know how to do is kill.

And so we're going to have to redouble our efforts in terms of intelligence, coordination, our countermessaging on extremism; working closely with Muslim communities, both overseas and in our own countries, to make sure that we are reducing the number of people who are inspired by their message or are, in some coordinated fashion, trying to attack us.

And obviously, we have built up a huge infrastructure to try to do that. The more successful we are in Iraq and Syria and Libya and other places where ISIL has gotten a stronghold, the weaker they are, the less resources they have, the less effectively they can recruit. But when individuals are willing to die, and they have no conscience and compunction about killing innocent people, they are hard to

detect. And it means that we've got to continually up our game.

Having said that, I think it is important to note just the success that we've seen in the last several weeks when it comes to rolling back Al Qaida. The liberation of Fallujah got a little bit lost in the news, but that's a big town, and with our support, the counter-ISIL coalition support, the Iraqi Government was able to move through there quickly. They're now positioning themselves so that they can start going after Mosul. In Syria, you're seeing progress along a pocket, Manbij, that has been used for foreign fighter flows. And so they're on their heels, and we're going to stay on it.

Now, when it comes to crime, generally, I think it's just important to keep in mind that our crime rate today is substantially lower than it was 5 years ago, 10 years ago, 20 years ago, 30 years ago. I mean, over the last 4 or 5 years, during the course of my Presidency, violent crime in the United States is the lowest it's been since probably the 1960s, maybe before the early 1960s. There's been an incredible drop in violent crime.

So that doesn't lessen, I think, people's understandable fears if they see a video clip of somebody getting killed. But it is important to keep in perspective that in places like New York or Los Angeles or Dallas, you've seen huge drops in the murder rates. And that's a testimony to smarter policing, and there are a range of other factors that have contributed to that.

So that should not—we should never be satisfied when any innocent person is being killed, but that should not be something that is driving our anxieties, relative to where we've been in the past.

And with respect to, finally, the issue of police shootings, there's no doubt that the visual records that we're seeing have elevated people's consciousness about this. But as I've said before, for African Americans or Latinos in the presmartphone age, I don't think that people were not aware of the fact that there is evidence of racial bias in our criminal justice system. It's been well documented, and it's been experienced. And even before I got to the U.S. Senate, when I was in the State Senate in Illinois, I passed legislation to try to reduce the incidents of racial profiling by collecting data. And that was prompted by evidence that it was taking place in certain parts of the State.

And the fact that we're aware of it may increase some anxiety right now and hurt and anger. But it's been said, sunshine is the best disinfectant. By seeing it, by people feeling a sense of urgency about it, by the larger American community realizing that, gosh, maybe this is a problem—and we've seen even some very conservative commentators begin to acknowledge this is something maybe we need to work on—that promises the possibility of actually getting it done. So it hurts, but if we don't diagnose this, we can't fix it.

Ayesha Rascoe, Reuters.

U.S. Race Relations

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. As you come to the end of your term, there's a lot of talk about your legacy. I know you may like to leave that to the historians, but——

The President. I do. [*Laughter*]

Q. ——but when you look back on your Presidency and consider race relations, what do you hope your legacy will be? How do you think the shootings in Dallas and the high-profile shootings by police and other events will shape the way your Presidency is remembered?

The President. I do want to leave legacy questions to the history books. But what I can do—maybe this is a fair response to your question—is to say how I've tried to lead the country on this issue.

More than anything, what I hope is that my voice has tried to get all of us as Americans to understand the difficult legacy of race; to encourage people to listen to each other; to recognize that the legacy of slavery and Jim Crow and discrimination didn't suddenly vanish with the passage of the Civil Rights Act or the Voting Rights Act or the election of Barack Obama; that things have gotten better—substantially better—but that we've still got a lot more work to do; and that, as was the case with the police Task Force that we set up, that I've

tried to encourage people to come up with practical, concrete solutions that can reduce, if not eliminate, the problems of racial bias.

And if my voice has been true and positive, then my hope would be that it may not fix everything right away, but it surfaces problems, it frames them; it allows us to wrestle with these issues and try to come up with practical solutions; and that that perspective may lead to continued improvement so that not just Malia and Sasha, but their children can experience a country that is more just and more united and more equal.

And that's not going to happen right away, and that's okay. We plant seeds, and somebody else maybe sits under the shade of the tree that we planted. And I'd like to think that, as best as I could, I have been true in speaking about these issues.

Justin Sink [Bloomberg News].

United Kingdom's Referendum Vote To Leave the European Union/Economic Globalization/Immigration/Refugee Crisis in Europe

Q. Thanks, Mr. President. Throughout the summit, EU leaders have echoed your confidence about Brexit happening in an orderly way. But they've also stressed that the U.K. has—to have access to an open market, must continue to respect the freedom of migration for workers. Someone who has repeatedly advocated for globalization and extolled the virtues of immigration, shouldn't that principle be prebaked in the negotiations? What specific assurances did you get during the summit from other leaders that make you confident that currency markets are wrong and the political turmoil in Britain and subsequent effort to leave the EU will go smoothly?

And finally, both you and Secretary Kerry have used "if" to describe Brexit. So I'm wondering if you see any way for the British people to put the toothpaste back in the tube on this issue.

The President. Okay. I think we have to assume that a referendum having been passed, with a lot of attention, a lengthy campaign, and relatively high participation rates, is going to stick, and that the incoming Government, a conservative Government, is going to invoke article 50 and begin the process of negotiations. How that process unfolds, how the negotiations work, I think, is going to be up to the parties involved.

The main message I've had here is, we are close friends, allies, commercial partners with the U.K. and with the EU. We will remain close friends, allies, partners, continue to have strong relationships on both sides of the Channel. Our primary interest is to make sure that the negotiations and this process are as orderly and as sensible as possible, recognizing that it is in the interests of both sides to get it right.

They are major trading partners. That's where goods get sent, back and forth. And it's important that neither side harden positions in ways that ultimately do damage to their respective economies and ultimately to the world economy at a time when our world economy is still pretty wobbly in places.

I want to make a further point. I'm not sure it's accurate to say that I am a huge booster of globalization. What is accurate to say is that I believe the process of globalization is here to stay, as a consequence of technology and the mobility of capital and cargo container ships and global supply chains. And conceivably, we could run back the tape to 50 years ago and see whether we could rearrange some of that process, but it's happening. It's here. And we see it every day in our lives. Everybody who has got a smartphone in their pocket is seeing it.

And my argument has been that there are enormous benefits to be gained from that global integration, just as there are enormous benefits to be gained from European integration, so long as we recognize that with that integration there is the danger of increased inequality, of workers having less leverage and capital having more leverage, that it threatens to leave people behind.

And if we don't take steps to make sure everybody can participate in that global integration—making sure that wages are high enough, making sure that we rebuild the social compact so that pensions and health care are taken care of, making sure that communities are not completely abandoned when a factory leaves and

there's an economic plan for transition—if we do not do that effectively, then there's going to be a backlash.

With respect to immigration, it is America's experience that immigration has been, by far, a net plus for our economic growth, our culture, our way of life. Now, in America, that's by necessity, because unless you're a Native American, you came from some—everybody came from someplace else. Europe may not have as many of those traditions.

But keep in mind, one of the huge macroeconomic advantages that America has is we're still a relatively young country, our birth rate is not dropping off like Europe's is or Russia's is or China's or Japan's. And that's as a consequence of immigration. And it's Economics 101, that if you've got a younger population, your growth rate is going to be higher.

And immigrants are strivers, and they work hard. And they're looking to build a better life. Otherwise, they wouldn't move from where they were. And that's been part of our tradition and our culture and our society.

Now, huge influxes of the sort that we've seen in Europe, that's always going to be a shock to the system. And I think it is entirely appropriate for Europe, even as generous as it has been—and I think that Chancellor Merkel deserves enormous credit, and other European leaders who have taken in these migrant populations deserve enormous credit, because that's hard. It's a strain on the budget. It's a strain on politics. It's a strain on culture. It's legitimate for them to say, look, we've got to slow this thing down. We've got to manage it properly.

That's why we're setting up a U.N. conference on refugees on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly, because a few countries shouldn't be shouldering the burden for 60 million refugees. And we've got to come up with strategies to allow people in countries that are very poor or are in the middle of a war zone enjoy some peace and prosperity. Otherwise, the world has shrank, and they're going to want to move. And that's not going to go away anytime soon.

So it's one more reason why, given the fact of global integration, we have to think globally, more broadly. Because our security interests, our economies are all going to depend on the institutional arrangements that we have across boundaries.

And NATO is an example of a really enduring multilateral institution that helped us get through some very difficult times. But even the best of institutions have to be adopted—adapted to new circumstances. That's true for organizations like NATO. It's true for organizations like the U.N. It's true for organizations like the EU. It's true for all the architecture that has helped the world and our countries improve their standard of livings and reduce overall violence between states substantially over the last several decades.

Mark Landler [New York Times].

Federal Bureau of Investigation Director James B. Comey, Jr.

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President. You've been scrupulous about saying you would not comment on the Justice Department investigation of Hillary Clinton's e-mail. That investigation is now closed. And I hope that I could ask you about some of the comments that FBI Director Comey made a few days ago. As you know——

The President. You may, Mark, but I want you to make sure you're not wasting your question. I'm going to continue to be scrupulous about not commenting on it, just because I think Director Comey could not have been more exhaustive. My understanding is not only did he make a full presentation, but while we were over here, or at least flying, he was presenting to Congress for hours on end. But I just wanted to give you a chance, just in case you didn't want to burn your question.

State Department's Handling of Classified Information/Cybersecurity/U.S. Military Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan/Counterterrorism Strategy/U.S. Foreign Policy

Q. Okay. I actually have a backup. [*Laughter*]

The President. There you go.

Q. Maybe I could cut to the chase and ask you about a broader question. Let's leave aside

Mrs. Clinton for the moment. He did talk at the end of his presentation about how he feared that there was a broader cultural issue in the State Department toward the handling of classified information that troubled him. And I wondered whether you—since you rely on the State Department to conduct your foreign policy—whether that concerns you as well.

The President. Yes.

Q. And if I may, could I ask the other question, because I think it might get an interesting response. You, last May, passed a milestone in that you are now—were President longer when the country was at war than your predecessor, George W. Bush. And if you complete your Presidency, as you will, with troops in Afghanistan, Syria, and Iraq, you will be the only two-term President in American history to have served with the country at war. And I wonder, given the way that you ran for office and the aspirations you brought into office, how you feel about that reality? And then, a second follow-up on that: Should the American people simply resign themselves to living in a state of perpetual war, even if that war is not the all-out war that we think of in the 20th century?

The President. Okay. That was an interesting question so—first of all, with respect to the State Department, I am concerned. And the challenge that we've got is primarily driven by the changing nature of how information flows. Look, the advent of e-mail and texts and smartphones is just generating enormous amounts of data. Now, it is hugely convenient. It means that in real time I'm getting information that some of my predecessors might not have gotten for weeks.

But what it also is doing is creating this massive influx of information on a daily basis, putting enormous pressure on the Department to sort through it, classify it properly, figure out what are the various points of entry because of the cyber-attack risks that these systems have, knowing that our adversaries are constantly trying to hack into these various systems. If you overclassify, then all the advantages of this new information suddenly go away because it's taking too long to process.

And so we've been trying to think about this in a smart way. And I think Secretary Kerry has got a range of initiatives to try to get our arms around this. It reflects a larger problem in Government. We just recently, for example—I just recently signed a bill about FOIA requests, Freedom of Information Act requests, that built on a number of reforms that we've put in place. We're processing more Freedom of Information Act requests and doing so faster than ever before. The problem is the volume of requests has skyrocketed. The amount of information that answers the request has multiplied exponentially.

So, across Government, you're seeing this problem. And it's a problem in terms of domestic affairs. It becomes an even bigger problem when you're talking about national security issues. So it is something that we're going to have to take care of.

With respect to reflections on war, when I came into office, we had 180,000 troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, we have a fraction of that. They are not involved in active combat situations, but are involved in "train, advise, and assist" situations, other than the direct attacks that we launch against ISIL in conjunction with the Iraq Government and the Syrian Government [partners on the ground in Syria].*

So, in some ways, Mark, I think you'd recognize that our military operations today in Iraq and Afghanistan are fundamentally different than the wars that we were engaged in when I came into office. But I think you are making an important point, which is when we are dealing with nonstate actors, and those nonstate actors are located in countries with limited capacity, our ultimate goal is to partner with those countries so that they can secure their borders and, themselves, eliminate these terrorist threats.

But as we've seen in Afghanistan, for example, that takes some time. The Afghans are fighting. They are much more capable now than they were when I came into office. But they still need support, because it's really

* White House correction.

tough territory, and it's a really poor country with really low literacy rates and not much experience in things that we take for granted like logistics.

And so we have an option of going in, taking out Al Qaida, pulling out, potentially then seeing a country crumble under the strains of continued terrorist activity or insurgency, and then going back in. Or we can try to maintain a limited partnership that allows them to continue to build their capacity over time and selectively take our own actions against those organizations that we know are trying to attack us or our allies.

Because they're nonstate actors, it's very hard for us ever to get the satisfaction of McArthur and the Emperor meeting and a war officially being over. AQI was defeated in the sense that we were able to execute a transition to a democratically elected Iraqi Government. But for all of our efforts and the incredible courage and bravery and sacrifice of our troops, the political structure there was still uneven. You had continued Sunni resentments, continued de-Baathification, and as a consequence, those vestiges of AQI were able to reconstitute themselves, move into Syria as Syria began to engage in civil war, rebuild, and then come back in.

Some have argued that this is the reason why we should have never pulled out of Iraq, or at least, we should have left some larger presence there. Of course, the problem was that we didn't have an Iraqi Government that wanted them, unlike Afghanistan, where we've been invited. And it's very difficult for us to—for me, as Commander in Chief, to want to put our troops in a precarious situation where they're not protected.

So I think what we've been trying to do, what I've been trying to do, is to create an architecture, a structure—and it's not there yet—that emphasizes partnerships with countries, emphasizes building up fragile states, resolving internal conflicts wherever we can, trying to do as much as we can through our local partners, preserving the possibility, the necessity to take strikes ourselves against organizations or individuals that we know are trying to kill Americans or Belgians or French or Germans, combine that with much more effective intelligence gathering. But it becomes more of a hybrid approach to national security. And that I do think is probably going to be something that we have to continue to grapple with for years to come.

The good news is that there are fewer wars between states than ever before and almost no wars between great powers. And that's a great legacy of leaders in the United States and Europe and Asia, after the cold war—or after the end of World War II that built this international architecture. That's worked. And we should be proud of that and preserve it.

But this different kind of low-grade threat, one that's not an existential threat, but can do real damage and real harm to our societies and creates the kind of fear that can cause division and political reactions—we have to do that better. We have to continually refine it.

So, for example, the reason that I put out our announcement about the civilian casualties resulting from drone attacks—understanding that there are those who dispute the numbers—what I'm trying to do there is to institutionalize a system where we begin to hold ourselves accountable for this different kind of national security threat and these different kinds of operations.

And it's imperfect, still. But I think we can get there. And what I can say honestly is, whether we're talking about how the NSA operates or how drone strikes operate or how we're partnering with other countries or my efforts to close Guantanamo, that by the end of my Presidency—or banning torture—by the end of my Presidency, I feel confident that these efforts will be on a firmer legal footing, more consistent with international law and norms, more reflective of our values and our ethics. But we're going to have more work to do. It's not perfect, and we have to wrestle with these issues all the time.

And as Commander in Chief of the most powerful military in the world, I spend a lot of time brooding over these issues. And I'm not satisfied that we've got it perfect yet. I can say

honestly, it's better than it was when I came into office.

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you, Poland.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 6:29 p.m. in the main press briefing room at the PGE National Stadium. In his remarks, the President referred to Lorne Ahrens, Michael Krol, Michael J. Smith, and Patrick Zamarripa, Dallas Police Department officers, and Brent Thompson, Dallas Area Rapid Transit Police officer, who were killed in the shooting at a public demonstration in Dallas, TX, on July 7; Chief David O. Brown of the Dallas Police Department; Alton Sterling and Philando Castile, who were killed by police officers in Baton Rouge, LA, on July 5 and Falcon Heights, MN, on July 6, respectively; Micah Xavier Johnson, suspected gunman in the Dallas shooting; Dylann S. Roof, accused gunman in the shooting at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, SC, on June 17, 2015; Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom; President François Hollande of France; Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany; Prime Minister Matteo Renzi of Italy; and President Petro Poroshenko of Ukraine. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization and its precursor, the Al Qaida in Iraq (AQI) terrorist organization.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With King Felipe VI of Spain in Madrid, Spain
July 10, 2016

[*King Felipe spoke in Spanish and then translated his remarks into English as follows.*]

King Felipe. Mr. President, allow me to again wish you the very warmest welcome to Spain. I want to thank you dearly for visiting us and especially for maintaining this visit, given the present particular circumstances.

[*King Felipe spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter as follows.*]

King Felipe. I'm very happy to be your host in the name of the Spanish people, here at the Royal Palace, a symbol of our history, a history that gives our country a tradition of a strong engagement with the Americas and with the rest of the world. The United States and Spain share principles, values, and interests. The ties between our two nations have been strengthened intensely in every area. We are firmly committed to always maintaining the closest possible cooperation with the United States of America, a country that is our friend and that plays a decisive role around the globe.

And in such a context of closeness and friendship, a crucial contribution is that of the many thousands of Spanish and U.S. citizens whose efforts are contributing every day to further strengthening the ties between two peoples that respect each other and that are able to look together towards the future with confidence and determination.

Mr. President, thank you very much for your stay here with us, which we so deeply appreciate and which is the very best expression of the sincere affection and abiding friendship that unites our two countries.

[*King Felipe spoke in English as follows.*]

I trust and hope, Mr. President, that in the future you will have further opportunities to visit us together with your family and to enjoy the many wonders that Spain, as you know, has to offer. Welcome.

President Obama. Thank you.

Well, good morning. And *muchas gracias,* Your Majesty. To the people of Spain and the Spanish Government, thank you so much for the extraordinary hospitality that you are offering me and my delegation. I wish I was staying longer. And I am so grateful for the understanding not only of His Majesty, but the people of Spain. We've had a difficult week back in the United States, so my trip is a little abbreviated. But I thought it was very important for me to come here, given the extraordinary

friendship and alliance that exists between Spain and the United States.

Although this is my first visit to Spain as the President of the United States, it is not my first visit to Spain or to Madrid. I confess, though, that the first time I came to Madrid was not on Air Force One. [*Laughter*] I was about to enter into law school. I had a backpack. I traveled by foot most of the time and ate very cheaply wherever I went. Never would I have imagined that I would have a reception with His Majesty.

But it is an extraordinary privilege to be able to be here and to receive the hospitality that I hope we were able to extend when His Majesty and Her Majesty Queen Letizia were able to visit the White House last year.

As you noted, Your Majesty, not only do we have tremendous connections through family, through commerce, through people-to-people exchanges, through our outstanding educational and cultural institutions, not only are we allies, but we are also two countries that share values and ideals of freedom, rule of law, the respect for the dignity of all people. And it is for that reason that we find ourselves working together not only in our bilateral relationship, but across a spectrum of global issues. And it is incredibly important for us to have such a strong partnership with the Spanish Government and the Spanish people.

And, Your Majesty, as with your father before you, you represent the strength and the spirit of the Spanish people. Your own connection to the United States has warmed the hearts of the American people and further strengthened the bond between our two countries. And as you showed during your visit to St. Augustine—the 450th anniversary of the connection between Spain and the New World—I am absolutely confident that the ties that bind us together will continue for many years to come.

So thank you for your hospitality. Thank you for the kindness that you and Her Majesty the Queen have extended to my family. And I can tell you that Michelle and my daughters love Spain and the Spanish people. And I very much look forward to continuing to build an extraordinary relationship between our two countries and hope my next visit, even if I'm not President, will be much longer than this one.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:51 a.m. in front of the Grand Staircase in the main entrance of the Palacio Real de Madrid. In his remarks, he referred to former King Juan Carlos I of Spain.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy Brey of Spain and an Exchange With Reporters in Madrid
July 10, 2016

Prime Minister Rajoy. Good morning, everybody. As you know, we've just had a meeting where we've addressed a number of issues, which I will be describing. First of all, I would like to welcome once again President—the President of the United States to the Palace of the Moncloa, President Barack Obama. I've thanked him, and I would like to thank him once again for coming before the end of his term. No U.S. President had visited Spain for 15 years last time—the last visit we had was 15 years ago.

So I would like to thank him particularly. I did it earlier, and I'd like to do it formally. On behalf of all Spaniards, I would like to thank him for maintaining his visit after the serious events that have taken place in his country. And I've expressed our sympathy and our affection for—to all the American people.

I've also explained the—this country's situation at this time, especially from an economic standpoint. The President of the United States knows how the situation has evolved in our economy. He showed interest for our country's economy. When the crisis started in 2007, 2008, and when I was already President of the Government in 2012, we went through very difficult times, and now we see that those

times have been overcome in spite of some pending issues.

Spain is no longer in a recession. Spain is growing; it's the economy which is growing fastest in the EU. And jobs are no longer destroyed; jobs are being created. In 2015, we had very positive figures, as you know. And 2016 is also positive for the time being, and we hope things will continue like that.

We've overcome imbalances. We're more competitive. And the Spanish economy has bright prospects if it continues—we continue to have an economic policy to keep public accounts under control and if we continue to undertake structural reforms.

We've also spoken about the elections in Spain, the process that has concluded with the 26 June elections. And I told President Obama that I will do everything possible to form a Government as soon as possible. I think that having had to rerun the elections for the first time in the history of Spain was bad news, but having to have a third election would be very negative, and it would affect the economy and also our credibility in Spain and outside.

We've also discussed issues on the European Union. We've talked about Brexit. Spain's position in the negotiations with the U.K. will be constructive. I think that's what is reasonable and what makes sense. We've also talked about the refugee crisis and the immigration problems and immigration for economic reasons. Obviously, we have a position, and our position is that problems need to be resolved at the point of origin, and we think that they should be resolved soon—the issue of Libya, the issue of Syria—because that will help us greatly.

And I've also told President Obama about what I'm doing at the EU so the EU gets involved in resolving problems at the point of origin. A young person who has no prospects in his or her country—who has no prospects to live in his country, who can't have a dignified life—will do anything he can to leave his or her country and find something elsewhere. So problems need to be resolved at the point of origin, and countries need to be helped. And we have to do it together with the European Union.

We've also talked about NATO relations. They're very good. We've talked about Rota, Morón. And I think things have been done properly with the consensus of most of Spanish society. And that's very good for Spain, and it's also very good for the United States and for all of us who defend democracy, freedom, human rights, and security for people.

Bilateral relations at this time are wonderful from all perspectives. The United States is the top investor in Spain—foreign investor. And the United States is the top country where Spanish companies invest as well.

Lastly, we've also addressed the situation in Cuba. We're optimistic for the future. We hope the outcome will be positive. And in Colombia, we wish lots of luck to President Santos because he's deploying great efforts. And we've also talked about Venezuela and the need to normalize the situation.

So we've addressed issues which are very important for Spain and for the United States. And I would like to conclude by saying, anyone who wants to hear me, that President Obama is a good friend of Spain's and a good friend of Spaniards. He's a committed person. He's honest and a person that we have cooperated with very pleasantly. We would be very pleased if he came back to Spain. He was already here lots of years ago, and he can come back whenever he wishes, because he will always be well remembered and welcome here.

President Obama. Well, let me begin by thanking Prime Minister Rajoy and his team and the Spanish people for welcoming us. It has been an extraordinarily gracious and warm welcome, particularly given the tough situation that we've had at home and my need to rearrange my schedule.

I was hoping for a longer stay, but I thought that it was important to make sure that, while I was still President, I visited such an important friend and ally. Because the relationship between us is a bond of friendship; it is an alliance relationship. We have shared economic and security interests. And we have shared values and ideals as two democracies. And the

United States, given the size of its Spanish-speaking population or persons with Hispanic heritage, I think, feel a special connection to Spain.

We—I thought the Prime Minister summarized our conversations well. We meet here at a difficult, challenging time for Europe and for the world. We have a world that is integrating rapidly and presents enormous opportunities. But if our institutional arrangements don't ensure inclusion, if we do not coordinate effectively on economic and security issues, then it can present great dangers, both in terms of our own people feeling as if they're left—being left behind, as well as people from other countries fleeing bad situations, wanting to come here, or engaging in conflicts that create safe havens for terrorism and present future challenges to us.

The good news is, is that the relationship between the United States and Spain is extremely strong and we have been able to work together on a whole range of these issues. I'm confident that taking the approach that Spain has suggested on the Brexit negotiations, that that can be managed in a way that does not have an adverse impact on economic growth and opportunity for all of Europe, including the U.K., and will not have an adverse effect on the global economy.

I want to congratulate the Prime Minister and the Spanish people for the economic progress that's been made over the last several years. It has been a difficult journey, but many of the changes that were taken are starting to bear fruit. And we still have more work to do, all of us, in improving the prospects for young people who are unemployed and creating more innovation and productivity and growth in our economies and making sure that those economies are broad based. So we discussed how we can do that on both sides of the Atlantic.

We just both came from the NATO meeting in Warsaw, and I want to thank the people of Spain and Spanish Armed Forces for the outstanding leadership that they provide on a whole spectrum of NATO initiatives, whether it's heading up one of NATO's new joint task forces, the incredible contribution that's provided by the Rota and Morón facilities and the hospitality shown to our forces, the work that the EU and NATO together are doing in the Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea. On all these issues, Spain has been a critical contributor. And Spain's men and women in uniform do an outstanding job.

As Prime Minister mentioned, we also are working together in some very difficult places, like the Middle East. And the contributions that Spain is making to training Iraqi military and police so that they can consolidate the gains that we're making against ISIL have been critically important, and we appreciate that very much as well.

Outside of Europe and the Middle East, we also discussed Latin America, where we have a shared interest, given Spain's roots and strong relationships throughout the Spanish-speaking world and given the fact that what happens in the southern half of our hemisphere has a huge impact on us. We agree that Cuba offers the potential of new prosperity and new freedom if managed correctly, the process of normalization between the United States and Cuba. Our hope is, is that although it will not happen overnight, that it provides new opportunity for the people of Cuba.

Peace in Colombia has been elusive for decades. And the fact that President Santos has been able to initiate these changes and forge a tentative, but very important peace deal, I think, promises greater prosperity and security for all the Colombian people.

We are jointly concerned about the situation in Venezuela. And our hope is, is that we can find a way in which all sides can come together, stabilize the Government, and stabilize the economy. And we want to be helpful, although, obviously, we cannot dictate the outcomes in Venezuela.

Let me just conclude by saying that I definitely will come back as an ex-President, because Spain is beautiful. The food, the culture, the people, the weather—it's hard to resist. But—and I want to thank the extraordinary hospitality that's been shown to Michelle and my daughters when they've traveled here. They love it as well. So I think, as your children get older, they don't always want to spend time

with you. But if you tell them, we'll take you to Spain—[*laughter*]—then it's a good way to bribe them and force them to spend time with you.

But as President of the United States, in my formal role, I want to express the warmth, the gratitude, the friendship that the American people feel towards the Spanish people. We share values. We share ideals. We believe in democracy. We believe in rule of law. We believe in the dignity of all people. And our work together across the international stage is hugely important.

So I hope that I'm setting a precedent so that it will not be another 15 years before the next U.S. President comes here.

Thank you very much.

Prime Minister Rajoy. Thank you.

President Obama. Are we starting with the American journalist or——

State Department's Handling of Classified Information/Cybersecurity/Criminal Justice Reform/Black Lives Matter Movement

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. I wanted to ask you about the continued demonstrations we saw overnight in response to some of the police-involved shootings. But at the risk of suffering the same fate as one of my colleagues yesterday, I also wanted to return to the issue of Secretary Clinton's e-mails because some of the comments that you have made in the past yourself about this. You said in April that you continue to believe that she has not jeopardized America's national security. But this week, FBI Director Comey said that their assessment was that it was possible hostile actors gained access to her e-mails and that there's evidence that they were extremely careless in their handling of very sensitive, highly classified information.

Do you accept that conclusion? And when you referred yesterday to the issue of overclassification, did you mean to suggest that some of the issues that were identified as classified might have been examples of that overclassification?

On to the other issue, you've commented in the past on some of the tactics of the Black Lives Matter's movement that you suggested have been counterproductive. We've seen continued protests, as I mentioned, overnight in many American cities over the Dallas tragedy. And as you prepare yourself to travel to Dallas, how would you advise the Black Lives Matter activists to approach this very sensitive issue—situation?

And, Prime Minister Rajoy, the President said in an interview with El Pais that he hopes and expects this next Spanish Government will remain committed to a strong relationship with the U.S. and to Europe. Are you in a position to make that kind of guarantee? And despite some of the concerns you raised about a possible third election, are you in a position to rule out the possibility? Thank you.

President Obama. Well, Mike [Michael A. Memoli, Los Angeles Times], on the first question, this has been a criminal investigation. The FBI Director took the extraordinary step of explaining in methodical fashion how they arrived at their conclusion. The Attorney General accepted the recommendation of the investigators. And as a consequence, I think it's inappropriate for me to second-guess or comment extensively on the conclusion that they arrived on.

When I talked about the fact that there are legitimate concerns around how information travels in the State Department, it's across the spectrum. It has to do with the volumes of information that are now being transmitted, who has access to them, concerns about cyber attacks and cybersecurity, concerns about making sure that we're transmitting information in real time so that we can make good decisions, but that it's not being mishandled in the process or making us more vulnerable.

And without commenting on what Director Comey said, I can tell you that Secretary Kerry is and has been concerned about this generally and has stood up initiatives to try to improve those information flows and that I'm concerned about this throughout the Government, generally. It just has a particular salience when you're talking about diplomatic cables and issues involving national security.

And I don't think we have it perfectly solved. I think we're going to have to do better

and learn from mistakes. And some of that will have to do with intentional—or some of that will have to do with changing systems. Some of it will have to do with how we train personnel from the very top: how I use my smartphone or BlackBerry, all the way down to the lowest-level staffer.

But we've seen problems on this. WikiLeaks was a big piece of business. And it wasn't intentional, but what it exposed was that there were a lot of vulnerabilities there. We know we've had hacking in the White House. And how people handle information, the precautionary steps that are taken, all those things are being examined thoroughly. And I think it will be a work in progress over time.

With respect to your second question, one of the great things about America is that individual citizens and groups of citizens can petition their government, can protest, can speak truth to power. And that is sometimes messy and controversial. But because of that ability to protest and engage in free speech, America, over time, has gotten better. We've all benefited from that.

The abolition movement was contentious. The effort for women to get the right to vote was contentious and messy. There were times when activists might have engaged in rhetoric that was overheated and occasionally counterproductive. But the point was to raise issues so that we, as a society, could grapple with it. The same was true with the civil rights movement and the union movement and the environmental movement, the antiwar movement during Vietnam. And I think what you're seeing now is part of that longstanding tradition.

What I would say is this: that whenever those of us who are concerned about fairness in the criminal justice system attack police officers, you are doing a disservice to the cause. First of all, any violence directed at police officers is a reprehensible crime, and it needs to be prosecuted. But even rhetorically, if we paint police in broad brush, without recognizing that the vast majority of police officers are doing a really good job and are trying to protect people and do so fairly and without racial bias, if our rhetoric does not recognize that, then we're going to lose allies in the reform cause.

Now, in a movement like Black Lives Matter, there's always going to be some folks who say things that are stupid or imprudent or overgeneralize or are harsh. And I don't think that you can hold well-meaning activists who are doing the right thing and peacefully protesting responsible for everything that is uttered at a protest site. But I would just say to everybody who's concerned about the issue of police shootings or racial bias in the criminal justice system that maintaining a truthful and serious and respectful tone is going to help mobilize American society to bring about real change. And that is our ultimate objective.

Now, this week, people felt hurt and angry, and so some of this is just venting. But I think that the overwhelming majority of people who are involved in the Black Lives Matter movement, what they really want to see is a better relationship between the police and the community so that they can feel that it's serving them. And the best way to do that is to bring allies aboard. That means—that includes, by the way, police departments that are doing the right thing, like Dallas, which has implemented the very reforms that Black Lives Matter is seeking. That's part of why it's so tragic that those officers were targeted in Dallas, a place that is—because of its transparency and training and openness and engagement with the community—has drastically brought down the number of police shootings and complaints about misconduct.

The flip side of that—and this is the last point I'll make—is just as my hope would be that everybody who is involved in the Black Lives Matter's movement or other civil rights organizations or who are protesting, just as I want all of them to maintain a respectful, thoughtful tone, because as a practical matter, that's what's going to get change done, I would hope that police organizations are also respectful of the frustrations that people in these communities feel and not just dismiss these protests and these complaints as political correctness or as politics or attacks on police. There are legitimate issues that have been raised, and

there's data and evidence to back up the concerns that are being expressed by these protesters.

And if police organizations and departments acknowledge that there's a problem and there's an issue, then that, too, is going to contribute to real solutions. And as I said yesterday, that is what's going to ultimately help make the job of being a cop a lot safer. It is in the interest of police officers that their communities trust them and that the kind of rancor and suspicion that exists right now is alleviated.

So I'd like all sides to listen to each other. And that's what we'll hopefully be able to accomplish over the course of the next week and over the course of the remaining months that I'm President.

Prime Minister Rajoy. Whatever happens when we try to form a new Government in Spain, well, that's something we'll see in the coming days how it proceeds. But I'm certain that everyone is going to act responsibly and that, therefore, Spain will soon have a Government.

In Spain, foreign policy and defense policy are generally the subject of an agreement among the largest political parties. We are in NATO at this time. We have reached agreements with the U.S. Government in Rota. Our troops are present in many countries around the world. They're in Turkey. They're in Iraq. They've been the Baltic. They're in Lebanon. And all the missions of the Spanish Army or of the civil guard or other police go through Parliament and they're voted on by members of Parliament. And there is an agreement on defense policy in Spain among the large traditional parties, and I'm sure that that's going to continue to be the case in the future.

The same applies to foreign policy. The major decisions in the area of foreign policy are also the subject of an agreement between the government of a nation and the party supporting it and at least the second largest political force, which has always been in power in Spain for many years. So foreign policy and defense policy and the relations with the United States, with whom we're a trustworthy and serious ally and we share the same principles and values, all of that will continue in the future, regardless of the outcome of the elections. I have no doubt about that. It's always been that way. At some specific points in time in our history, there have been disagreements, but most of the decisions on defense policy, foreign policy, and U.S.-Spain relations are always the subject of an agreement supported by the Spanish people.

Spain-U.S. Relations/U.S. Presidential Election/Economic Globalization

Q. I'd like to ask President Obama if he's concerned about how long it's taking to form a Government in Spain and whether that can affect the U.S.-Spain relations and also whether you think in both countries populists could come to power.

And I'd like to ask President Rajoy the following. You said that you had told Mr. Obama that you would like to have a Government in Spain soon. I don't know whether you've gone into the details as to the agreements to form a Government. And regarding the next elections in the United States, do you think that if Trump wins, that would be worrying for the United States and for the U.S.-EU and U.S.-Spain relations? Thank you.

President Obama. Well, I think Prime Minister Rajoy is absolutely right that although it matters a great deal to us that we have a stable, well-functioning Spanish Government, the nature of the relationship, the bond between the United States and Spain is not dependent on which party is in power, in the same way that my expectation would be that, although there might be differences in foreign policy if I had a successor that was Republican rather than Democrat, there would still be a core interest as fellow NATO members who are concerned about terrorism and are concerned about a wide range of international and security and economic issues.

So I wish the Prime Minister luck. He did not go into the details, by the way. It's not my job to figure out what all the ins and outs of negotiations may be in forming a Spanish Government. But I'm very confident that whatever Government emerges, we'll be able to work

with them effectively on a whole range of issues.

As you point out, I've got my own politics to worry about back home. [*Laughter*] And I won't comment on the U.S. election, because I think that's for the American people ultimately to decide. I am—what I would say is, is that I have great confidence in the American people, their goodness, their values, their decency, their common sense. And although our political process is messy and dominated by too much money, and it lasts too long, and there's a lot of rhetoric that is all over the place, at the end of the day, I think people recognize the importance of the office of the President and that the United States occupies a unique role in the world and will take that decision about who sits in the Oval Office very seriously.

There are some connections between populist impulses and voices in the United States and what's happening here in Europe, whether what we've seen in Brexit or other parties that have arisen in other European countries. And I would just go back to what I've said before, that if global integration does not work for everybody, if it simply helps elites and you see growing inequality and people feel left behind, then you will get a crude populism that often is divisive. And that's not good for anybody. But those kinds of politics will grow.

If, like me, you believe that the exchange of trade and communications and culture and ideas and greater global understanding and integration can be a good thing, then that has to be accompanied with policies that address inequality, that make sure workers are getting fair wages and that the social compact and the social welfare system is strengthened for the 21st century and we're attentive to environmental concerns and other concerns that have been raised by progressive organizations.

If we ignore those things, then that—those fears and anxieties will be challenged—or be channeled in an unproductive way. If we address them squarely, then I think politics on both sides of the Atlantic will be just fine.

Prime Minister Rajoy. There were two questions, whether I've explained to the U.S. President what I'm going to do to get an agreement so that there can be a Government and so new elections can be avoided. Well, I haven't gone into those details because, naturally, we don't go into that kind of detail.

But what I will say is that Spain has urgent matters ahead of it. First, we have to approve a budget, an expenditure cap, and get the situation back to normalcy and to continue growing and creating jobs.

Secondly, I'm going to ask for a broad consensus on European policy where we'll see very important matters coming up in the coming months, starting with Brexit, refugee problems, the European integration process, and so on.

And then, my concerns for the future are mostly four or five: first, employment; two, keeping our welfare state; three, combatting terrorism; four, defending the unity of Spain; and five, having a foreign and defense policy like the one we have had in the past 4 years in our country.

So, on that basis, I think we can build, and I think we should build, because as I've said, we've had an acting Government for a long time. For the time being, this hasn't affected our economy. Jobs are being created. I think this year is going to be good as far as job creation goes. But we shouldn't play with fire. I think that too much time has gone by, and Spain needs a Government as soon as possible.

Regarding the Government of the United States and the candidate on which you asked your question, allow me to say something obvious. The President of the United States will be whoever the American people decides. And the rest of us have nothing to say about that and much less when you're President of a Government of a country that's a friend.

And based on that, our relations, I'm sure, will be good. They will continue to be like they've been. Because peoples and countries are above individuals, and there are a lot of things that bring us together. There's a lot of joint work, and there's a lot of plans for the future. Individuals are also important, but it's mainly the shared history and the willingness to work together for the future that matter.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 10:55 a.m. in the Official Chamber at the Palacio de la Moncloa. In his remarks, he referred to the United Kingdom's June 23 referendum vote to leave the European Union; and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. Prime Minister Rajoy referred to Donald J. Trump, chairman and president, Trump Organization, in his capacity as a U.S. Republican Presidential candidate. A reporter referred to former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. Prime Minister Rajoy spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks to United States and Spanish Troops at Naval Station Rota in Rota, Spain
July 10, 2016

Hello, Team Rota! *Buenas tardes!* Please, everybody, have a seat. Thank you, Minister Morenes, for your kind introduction, for your leadership, and for your partnership. We could not ask for a better ally than Spain.

I want to recognize your outstanding leadership team here at Rota. Vice Admiral Jaime Foggo, give him a big round of applause. Come on, guys. [*Applause*] Captain Mike MacNicholl. Now, apparently, Mike has only been here 3 weeks. Five days after he started, the Secretary of the Navy visited. And now here comes the President. So we're testing Mike a little bit. It's like the in-laws coming over. [*Laughter*] But he is doing an outstanding job already. We have great confidence in him. And I also want to acknowledge Command Master Chief Michelle Brooks. I tend to like people named Michelle. [*Laughter*] And you spell it right, with two l's. [*Laughter*] It's the right way to do it.

Now, we've got quite a group here today. We've got sailors from the United States Navy. We've got the Air Force 725th Maintenance Squadron. We've got marines from Morón. [*Applause*] Marines, hey! [*Laughter*] We've got outstanding civilian personnel. Don't be left out, civilians. Let's make some noise. [*Applause*] And of course, we've got the loved ones who serve by your side. Give it up for our incredible military families. Woo!

And we're proud to be joined by our outstanding Spanish allies and friends. Marineros from Spain's armada. I want to—yes, we can clap. [*Applause*] Come on! See, the Spanish are a little more polite than we are. [*Laughter*] Right? We're just yelling.

I want to acknowledge Admiral Muñoz-Delgado, Admiral Suanzes, and [Vice]* Admiral González Gómez. And on behalf of the American people, I want to thank Mayor Arana and everyone in this community and this country for being such great hosts and partners and friends to all the American personnel and their families who are here in Spain. We're grateful. *Muchas gracias.*

Now, I'm not going to give a long speech. I know you've been standing here for—or sitting here for a while, and it's a little warm. But what I really wanted to do is come down and shake some hands. You know, I—look, I'll be honest, it's been a tough week back home. And I've had to adjust my schedule. I was going to be in Spain for 2 days; now I'm just here for a day. But I didn't want to miss the opportunity to come and thank all of you for your outstanding service.

I just wrapped up our 2 days of meetings at the NATO summit in Warsaw, in Poland. And obviously, it's a challenging time for all of our countries. Recent terrorist attacks have shaken America and France and Belgium and Turkey. Migrants who are seeking refuge, many from war-torn countries, are flocking to Europe. Russia's aggression against the Ukraine threatens our vision of a Europe that is at peace. And a vote in Britain has raised questions about the kind of Europe that we're going to see in the years ahead.

* White House correction.

So, on my visit to Europe, what I've been trying to communicate, what I've been wanting to focus on is America's relation to Europe and the fact that our commitment will not change. We have an enduring commitment to the transatlantic alliance and to our allies in Europe because you are central to our security, and we could not have a more important alliance or a better set of friends than those of us—those of you here in Europe. That includes a strong and unified Spain, one of our closest allies.

The alliance between our countries is rooted in shared values of democracy and pluralism and open markets and our shared commitment to freedom. For more than 60 years, Spain has hosted Americans here at Rota. Today, this base is home to more than 3,000 Americans. And it's the home port for American destroyers that strengthen our alliance's new missile defense, as I just saw during my visit aboard the USS *Ross*. Although, I will say, when I visit ships these days, I feel like an old man, because the average age is, like, 21 on these ships. And I had to tell some of the folks onboard that you couldn't put me in charge of anything at 21. So the fact that they're doing such incredible work makes me really proud.

But day in and day out, Americans and Spaniards like you serve together, shoulder to shoulder, not only here, but in missions for our common security: in the coalition to destroy ISIL, combating piracy, supporting peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts. And that's because we believe that people around the world, and here in Europe, have the right to live in security and prosperity and dignity. That's what America stands for, that's what Spain stands for, and that's what NATO stands for.

So my message today is that we're going to keep standing together to meet the challenges of our time. In the face of terrorist networks that seek to destroy, we're going to prevail not only because of our military strength, but because we will stay true to our values: our diversity, our respect for one another, our refusal to be divided by ethnicity or nationality or religion. In the face of humanitarian crises, we're going to deliver help and hope to those in need. In the face of aggression, we'll stand up for the sovereignty of nations like Ukraine. And in this moment of uncertainty in Europe, we'll remain steadfast allies through NATO, the strongest alliance that the world has ever known.

So, Team Rota, all of you embody this spirit of cooperation and resolve as well as anyone. And my main message here today is to say thank you. Thank you for your service on behalf of a safer America, a safer Spain, and a safer world. And to all our Spanish friends, thank you for your friendship and thank you for your service.

To all the Americans who are here, I know it's never easy serving far away from home, although, I must say, if you've got to be away from home, this is not a bad place to be. [*Laughter*] But even in a place as beautiful as this, you're missing holidays and birthdays and family reunions. But each and every day, you stand up for our country, and you do it with honor, and you do it with courage, and you do it with commitment. So, on behalf of a grateful nation, let me just say that we're proud of you. We honor you. We thank you for your service, and we thank your inspiring families as well, for all that they do to make sure that you can do your jobs.

At a time when sometimes the world feels uncertain, sometimes, people ask me, how do you stay so calm? And what I tell them is, as tough as the challenges are, as serious as the threats that we face, the one thing that I have learned during the time that I've had the privilege to be the President of the United States is that the American people are good and they are decent. And we have the finest fighting force the world has ever known. We have great partners around the world. And I am absolutely confident that people of good will will ultimately overcome those forces that seek to divide and destroy us. You give me confidence. You give me hope.

God bless you. God bless the United States of America! God bless Spain! Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:53 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Minister of Defense Pedro Morenes Eulate of Spain; Vice Adm. James G. Foggo III, USN, commander, U.S. 6th Fleet; Capt. Michael MacNicholl, USN, commanding officer, and Command Master Chief Petty Officer Michelle L. Brooks, USN, U.S. Naval Station Rota; Adm. Gen. Jaime Muñoz-Delgado, chief of naval staff, Adm. Francisco Javier Franco Suanzes, fleet commander, and Vice Adm. Santiago Ramón González Gómez, admiral of logistics support for the Bay of Cádiz, Spanish Navy. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Remarks at a Memorial Service for Victims of the Shooting of Law Enforcement Officers in Dallas, Texas
July 12, 2016

Thank you very much. To Mr. President and Mrs. Bush; my friend, the Vice President, and Dr. Biden; Mayor Rawlings; Chief Spiller; clergy; Members of Congress; Chief Brown—I'm so glad I met Michelle first, because she loves Stevie Wonder—[*laughter*]—but most of all, to the families and friends and colleagues and fellow officers: Scripture tells us that in our sufferings there is glory, "because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope." Now, sometimes, the truths of these words are hard to see. Right now those words test us. Because the people of Dallas—people across the country—are suffering.

We're here to honor the memory, and mourn the loss, of five fellow Americans; to grieve with their loved ones, to support this community, to pray for the wounded, and to try and find some meaning amidst our sorrow.

For the men and women who protect and serve the people of Dallas, last Thursday began like any other day. Like most Americans each day, you get up, probably have too quick a breakfast, kiss your family goodbye, and you head to work. But your work—and the work of police officers across the country—is like no other. For the moment you put on that uniform, you have answered a call that at any moment, even in the briefest interaction, may put your life in harm's way.

Lorne Ahrens, he answered that call. So did his wife Katrina, not only because she was the spouse of a police officer, but because she's a detective on the force. They have two kids. And Lorne took them fishing and used to proudly go to their school in uniform. And the night before he died, he bought dinner for a homeless man. And the next night, Katrina had to tell their children that their dad was gone. And "they don't get it yet," their grandma said. "They don't know what to do quite yet."

Michael Krol answered that call. His mother said, "He knew the dangers of the job, but he never shied away from his duty." He came a thousand miles from his home State of Michigan to be a cop in Dallas, telling his family, "This is something I wanted to do." And last year, he brought his girlfriend back to Detroit for Thanksgiving, and it was the last time he'd see his family.

Michael Smith answered that call: in the Army and over almost 30 years working for the Dallas Police Association, which gave him the appropriately named Cops' Cop Award. A man of deep faith, when he was off duty, he could be found at church or playing softball with his two girls. Today, his girls have lost their dad, for God has called Michael home.

Patrick Zamarripa, he answered that call. Just 32, a former altar boy who served in the Navy and dreamed of being a cop. He liked to post videos of himself and his kids on social media. And on Thursday night, while Patrick went to work, his partner Kristy posted a photo of her and their daughter at a Texas Rangers game, and tagged her partner so that he could see it while on duty.

Brent Thompson answered that call. He served his country as a marine. And years later,

as a contractor, he spent time in some of the most dangerous parts of Iraq and Afghanistan. And then a few years ago, he settled down here in Dallas for a new life of service as a transit cop. And just about 2 weeks ago, he married a fellow officer, their whole life together waiting before them.

Like police officers across the country, these men and their families shared a commitment to something larger than themselves. They weren't looking for their names to be up in lights. They'd tell you the pay was decent, but wouldn't make you rich. They could have told you about the stress and long shifts, and they'd probably agree with Chief Brown when he said that cops don't expect to hear the words "thank you" very often, especially from those who need them the most.

No, the reward comes in knowing that our entire way of life in America depends on the rule of law; that the maintenance of that law is a hard and daily labor; that in this country, we don't have soldiers in the streets or militias setting the rules. Instead, we have public servants—police officers—like the men who were taken away from us.

And that's what these five were doing last Thursday when they were assigned to protect and keep orderly a peaceful protest in response to the killing of Alton Sterling of Baton Rouge and Philando Castile of Minnesota. They were upholding the constitutional rights of this country.

For a while, the protest went on without incident. And despite the fact that police conduct was the subject of the protest, despite the fact that there must have been signs or slogans or chants with which they profoundly disagreed, these men and this department did their jobs like the professionals that they were. In fact, the police had been part of the protest planning. Dallas PD even posted photos on their Twitter feeds of their own officers standing among the protesters. Two officers, Black and White, smiled next to a man with a sign that read, "No Justice, No Peace."

And then, around 9 o'clock, the gunfire came. Another community torn apart. More hearts broken. More questions about what caused, and what might prevent, another such tragedy.

I know that Americans are struggling right now with what we've witnessed over the past week. First, the shootings in Minnesota and Baton Rouge and the protests, then the targeting of police by the shooter here, an act not just of demented violence, but of racial hatred. All of it's left us wounded and angry and hurt. It's as if the deepest faultlines of our democracy have suddenly been exposed, perhaps even widened. And although we know that such divisions are not new—though they've surely been worse in even the recent past—that offers us little comfort.

Faced with this violence, we wonder if the divides of race in America can ever be bridged. We wonder if an African American community that feels unfairly targeted by police, and police departments that feel unfairly maligned for doing their jobs, can ever understand each other's experience. We turn on the TV or surf the Internet, and we can watch positions harden and lines drawn, and people retreat to their respective corners, and politicians calculate how to grab attention or avoid the fallout. We see all this, and it's hard not to think sometimes that the center won't hold and that things might get worse.

I understand. I understand how Americans are feeling. But, Dallas, I'm here to say we must reject such despair. I'm here to insist that we are not as divided as we seem. And I know that because I know America. I know how far we've come against impossible odds. I know we'll make it because of what I've experienced in my own life, what I've seen of this country and its people—their goodness and decency—as President of the United States. And I know it because of what we've seen here in Dallas, how all of you, out of great suffering, have shown us the meaning of perseverance and character and hope.

When the bullets started flying, the men and women of the Dallas police, they did not flinch, and they did not react recklessly. They showed incredible restraint. Helped in some cases by protesters, they evacuated the injured, isolated the shooter, saved more lives than we

will ever know. We mourn fewer people today because of your brave actions. "Everyone was helping each other," one witness said. "It wasn't about Black or White. Everyone was picking each other up and moving them away." See, that's the America I know.

The police helped Shetamia Taylor as she was shot trying to shield her four sons. She said she wanted her boys to join her to protest the incidents of Black men being killed. She also said to the Dallas PD, "Thank you for being heroes." And today, her 12-year-old son wants to be a cop when he grows up. That's the America I know.

In the aftermath of the shooting, we've seen Mayor Rawlings and Chief Brown, a White man and a Black man with different backgrounds, working not just to restore order and support a shaken city, a shaken department, but working together to unify a city with strength and grace and wisdom. And in the process, we've been reminded that the Dallas Police Department has been at the forefront of improving relations between police and the community. The murder rate here has fallen. Complaints of excessive force have been cut by 64 percent. The Dallas Police Department has been doing it the right way. And so, Mayor Rawlings and Chief Brown, on behalf of the American people, thank you for your steady leadership, thank you for your powerful example. We could not be prouder of you.

These men, this department, these—this is the America I know. And today, in this audience, I see people who have protested on behalf of criminal justice reform grieving alongside police officers. I see people who mourn for the five officers we lost, but also weep for the families of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile. In this audience, I see what's possible when we recognize that we are one American family, all deserving of equal treatment, all deserving of equal respect, all children of God. That's the America I know.

Now, I'm not naive. I have spoken at too many memorials during the course of this Presidency. I've hugged too many families who have lost a loved one to senseless violence. And I've seen how a spirit of unity, born of tragedy, can gradually dissipate, overtaken by the return to business as usual, by inertia and old habits and expediency. I see how easily we slip back into our old notions, because they're comfortable, we're used to them. I've seen how inadequate words can be in bringing about lasting change. I've seen how inadequate my own words have been. And so I'm reminded of a passage in John's Gospel [First John]* : "Let us love not with words or speech, but with actions and in truth." If we're to sustain the unity we need to get through these difficult times, if we are to honor these five outstanding officers who we've lost, then we will need to act on the truths that we know. And that's not easy. It makes us uncomfortable. But we're going to have to be honest with each other and ourselves.

We know that the overwhelming majority of police officers do an incredibly hard and dangerous job fairly and professionally. They are deserving of our respect and not our scorn. And when anyone, no matter how good their intentions may be, paints all police as biased or bigoted, we undermine those officers we depend on for our safety. And as for those who use rhetoric suggesting harm to police, even if they don't act on it themselves, well, they not only make the jobs of police officers even more dangerous, but they do a disservice to the very cause of justice that they claim to promote.

We also know that centuries of racial discrimination—of slavery and subjugation and Jim Crow—they didn't simply vanish with the end of lawful segregation. They didn't just stop when Dr. King made a speech or the Voting Rights Act and the Civil Rights Act were signed. Race relations have improved dramatically in my lifetime. Those who deny it are dishonoring the struggles that helped us achieve that progress.

But we know—but, America, we know that bias remains. We know it. Whether you are Black or White or Hispanic or Asian or Native American or of Middle Eastern descent, we

* White House correction.

have all seen this bigotry in our own lives at some point. We've heard it at times in our own homes. If we're honest, perhaps we've heard prejudice in our own heads and felt it in our own hearts. We know that. And while some suffer far more under racism's burden, some feel to a far greater extent discrimination's sting; although most of us do our best to guard against it and teach our children better, none of us is entirely innocent. No institution is entirely immune. And that includes our police departments. We know this.

And so, when African Americans from all walks of life, from different communities across the country, voice a growing despair over what they perceive to be unequal treatment; when study after study shows that Whites and people of color experience the criminal justice system differently so that if you're Black you're more likely to be pulled over or searched or arrested, more likely to get longer sentences, more likely to get the death penalty for the same crime; when mothers and fathers raise their kids right and have "the talk" about how to respond if stopped by a police officer—"yes, sir," "no, sir"—but still fear that something terrible may happen when their child walks out the door, still fear that kids being stupid and not quite doing things right might end in tragedy—when all this takes place more than 50 years after the passage of the Civil Rights Act, we cannot simply turn away and dismiss those in peaceful protest as troublemakers or paranoid. We can't simply dismiss it as a symptom of political correctness or reverse racism. To have your experience denied like that, dismissed by those in authority, dismissed perhaps even by your White friends and coworkers and fellow church members again and again and again, it hurts. Surely, we can see that, all of us.

We also know what Chief Brown has said is true: That so much of the tensions between police departments and minority communities that they serve is because we ask the police to do too much and we ask too little of ourselves. As a society, we choose to underinvest in decent schools. We allow poverty to fester so that entire neighborhoods offer no prospect for gainful employment. We refuse to fund drug treatment and mental health programs. We flood communities with so many guns that it is easier for a teenager to buy a Glock than get his hands on a computer or even a book, and then we tell the police, "You're a social worker, you're the parent, you're the teacher, you're the drug counselor." We tell them to keep those neighborhoods in check at all costs and do so without causing any political blowback or inconvenience. Don't make a mistake that might disturb our own peace of mind. And then we feign surprise when, periodically, the tensions boil over.

We know these things to be true. They've been true for a long time. We know it. Police, you know it. Protesters, you know it. You know how dangerous some of the communities where these police officers serve are, and you pretend as if there's no context. These things we know to be true. And if we cannot even talk about these things, if we cannot talk honestly and openly not just in the comfort of our own circles, but with those who look different than us or bring a different perspective, then we will never break this dangerous cycle.

In the end, it's not about finding policies that work, it's about forging consensus and fighting cynicism and finding the will to make change. Can we do this? Can we find the character, as Americans, to open our hearts to each other? Can we see in each other a common humanity and a shared dignity and recognize how our different experiences have shaped us? And it doesn't make anybody perfectly good or perfectly bad, it just makes us human. I don't know. I confess that sometimes I, too, experience doubt. I've been to too many of these things. I've seen too many families go through this. But then I am reminded of what the Lord tells Ezekiel. "I will give you a new heart," the Lord says, "and put a new spirit in you. I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh."

That's what we must pray for, each of us: a new heart. Not a heart of stone, but a heart open to the fears and hopes and challenges of our fellow citizens. That's what we've seen in

Dallas these past few days. That's what we must sustain.

Because with an open heart, we can learn to stand in each other's shoes and look at the world through each other's eyes so that maybe the police officer sees his own son in that teenager with a hoodie who's kind of goofing off, but not dangerous; and the teenager, maybe the teenager will see in the police officer the same words and values and authority of his parents.

With an open heart, we can abandon the overheated rhetoric and the oversimplification that reduces whole categories of our fellow Americans, not just to opponents, but to enemies.

With an open heart, those protesting for change will guard against reckless language going forward, look at the model set by the five officers we mourn today, acknowledge the progress brought about by the sincere efforts of police departments like this one in Dallas, and embark on the hard but necessary work of negotiation, the pursuit of reconciliation.

With an open heart, police departments will acknowledge that, just like the rest of us, they are not perfect; that insisting we do better to root out racial bias is not an attack on cops, but an effort to live up to our highest ideals. And I understand, these protests—I see them—they can be messy. Sometimes, they can be hijacked by an irresponsible few. Police can get hurt. Protesters can get hurt. They can be frustrating.

But even those who dislike the phrase "Black Lives Matter," surely we should be able to hear the pain of Alton Sterling's family. We should—when we hear a friend describe him by saying that "whatever he cooked, he cooked enough for everybody," that should sound familiar to us, that maybe he wasn't so different than us, so that we can, yes, insist that his life matters. Just as we should hear the students and coworkers describe their affection for Philando Castile as a gentle soul—"Mr. Rogers with dreadlocks," they called him—and know that his life mattered to a whole lot of people of all races, of all ages, and that we have to do what we can, without putting officers' lives at risk, but do better to prevent another life like his from being lost.

With an open heart, we can worry less about which side has been wronged and worry more about joining sides to do right. Because the vicious killer of these police officers, they won't be the last person who tries to make us turn on one other. And the killer in Orlando wasn't, nor was the killer in Charleston. We know there is evil in this world. That's why we need police departments. But as Americans, we can decide that people like this killer will ultimately fail. They will not drive us apart. We can decide to come together and make our country reflect the good inside us, the hopes and simple dreams we share.

"We also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope." For all of us, life presents challenges and suffering: accidents, illnesses, the loss of loved ones. There are times when we are overwhelmed by sudden calamity, natural or man-made. All of us, we make mistakes. And at times, we are lost. And as we get older, we learn we don't always have control of things, not even a President does. But we do have control over how we respond to the world. We do have control over how we treat one another.

America does not ask us to be perfect. Precisely because of our individual imperfections, our Founders gave us institutions to guard against tyranny and ensure no one is above the law; a democracy that gives us the space to work through our differences and debate them peacefully, to make things better, even if it doesn't always happen as fast as we'd like. America gives us the capacity to change.

But as the men we mourn today—these five heroes—knew better than most, we cannot take the blessings of this Nation for granted. Only by working together can we preserve those institutions of family and community, rights and responsibilities, law and self-government that is the hallmark of this Nation. For, it turns out, we do not persevere alone. Our character is not found in isolation. Hope does not arise by putting our fellow man down, it is found by lifting others up.

And that's what I take away from the lives of these outstanding men. The pain we feel may not soon pass, but my faith tells me that they did not die in vain. I believe our sorrow can make us a better country. I believe our righteous anger can be transformed into more justice and more peace. Weeping may endure for a night, but I'm convinced joy comes in the morning. We cannot match the sacrifices made by Officers Zamarripa and Ahrens, Krol, Smith, and Thompson, but surely we can try to match their sense of service. We cannot match their courage, but we can strive to match their devotion.

May God bless their memory. May God bless this country that we love.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:46 p.m. at Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center. In his remarks, he referred to former President George W. Bush and former First Lady Laura Bush; Chief James Spiller of the Dallas Area Rapid Transit Police; Chief David O. Brown of the Dallas Police Department, who introduced the President; musician Stevie Wonder; Officers Lorne Ahrens, Michael Krol, Michael J. Smith, and Patrick Zamarripa, Dallas Police Department, and Ofc. Brent Thompson, Dallas Area Rapid Transit Police, who were killed in the shooting at a public demonstration in Dallas, TX, on July 7; Dallas Police Department Detective Katrina Ahrens, wife of Ofc. Ahrens, their children Sorcha and Magus, and her mother Karen Buckingham; Dallas, TX, resident Bill Connor; Susan Ehlke, mother, and Marie Tijerina, girlfriend, of Ofc. Krol; Caroline and Victoria Smith, children of Ofc. Smith; Lyncoln and Dylan Zamarripa, children, and Kristy Villasenor, wife, of Ofc. Zamarripa; Ofc. Emily Thompson, Dallas Area Rapid Transit Police, wife of Ofc. Thompson; Alton Sterling and Philando Castile, who were killed by police officers in Baton Rouge, LA, on July 5 and Falcon Heights, MN, on July 6, respectively; Maj. Lonzo Anderson, Jr., and Maj. Paul Junger, Dallas Police Department; Garland, TX, resident Shetamia Taylor, who was injured in the July 7 shooting, and her sons Kavion and Jajuan Washington, Jermar Taylor, and Andrew Humphrey; Micah Xavier Johnson, suspected gunman in the July 7 shooting; and Dylann S. Roof, accused gunman in the shooting at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, SC, on June 17, 2015. The related proclamation of July 8 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Deployment of United States Armed Forces Personnel to South South Sudan
July 13, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Mr. President:)

In response to the deteriorating security situation in South Sudan, I have ordered the deployment of additional U.S. Armed Forces personnel to South Sudan to support the security of U.S. personnel, and our Embassy in Juba. The first of these additional personnel, approximately 47 individuals, arrived in South Sudan on July 12, 2016, supported by military aircraft. Although equipped for combat, these additional personnel are deployed for the purpose of protecting U.S. citizens and property. These deployed personnel will remain in South Sudan until the security situation becomes such that their presence is no longer needed. Additional U.S. Armed Forces, including approximately 130 military personnel currently pre-positioned in Djibouti, are prepared to provide support, as necessary, for the security of U.S. citizens and property, including our Embassy, in South Sudan.

I have directed this action consistent with my responsibility to protect U.S. citizens both at home and abroad, and in furtherance of U.S. national security and foreign policy interests, pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93–148). I appreciate the support of the Congress in these actions.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Orrin G. Hatch, President pro tempore of the Senate.

Remarks Following a Meeting on Community Policing and Criminal Justice Reform

July 13, 2016

The President. Well, we have had an excellent conversation. This group in part represents the 21st-Century Policing Task Force that I put together after Ferguson in order for us to find constructive steps that we could take that law enforcement and communities could get behind in order to make sure that we're keeping our streets safe and we are protecting and supporting police officers who are doing a very difficult job, and we can make sure that our communities are being treated fairly and that people have confidence that the law applies to everybody equally.

Thanks to Laurie Robinson and Charles Ramsey and the members of that Task Force, we came up with a set of recommendations. And the good news is, is that over the last several months since the report was issued, we have seen a lot of law enforcement officers, a lot of chiefs, a lot of departments begin to examine these recommendations and figure out how they can implement them. We've seen real progress with respect to data gathering. We've seen real progress with respect to training. We've seen progress with respect to transparency and outreach to communities.

The bad news is, as we saw so painfully this week, that this is a really hard job. We're not there yet. We're not even close to being there yet: where we want to be. We're not at a point yet where communities of color feel confident that their police departments are serving them with dignity and respect and equality. And we're not at the point yet where police departments feel adequately supported at all levels.

So what we've done here is to build off the Task Force report and find out what's working, what's not, and what more do we have to do in order to bring the country and communities around the country together and make more progress on this front.

And I'll just characterize a couple of things that have been identified. And I want to emphasize that there's still a diversity of views around this table. That was by design. We have police chiefs and representatives of rank-and-file law enforcement. We've got people who have been protesting just this week. And we have sociologists, civil rights attorneys, Governors, State legislatures. So, as you might expect, not everybody agrees on everything. But here are the buckets of issues that everybody identified as worthy of more work, more study, and ultimately, more action.

Number one, we're going to have to do more work together in thinking about how we can build confidence that after police officers have used force, and particularly deadly force, that there is confidence in how the investigation takes place and that justice is done.

Now, that's a complicated piece of work, but it's going to involve engaging with police departments and States' attorneys, as well as communities themselves, and potentially shaping a set of best practices that ensure when something happens that people feel like it's being investigated effectively and fairly both for the police officer, but also for the families of those who've been affected. And so one of our charges, I think, is to try to find effective ways to do that.

Second is continuing work on working with police departments around training, which we emphasized in the initial Task Force, but also

hiring, recruitment. And one of the themes that came from a number of people is, how do we support police officers not just in terms of eliminating bias, but also dealing with the stresses and strains of the job so that they have the capacity to interact with communities and deescalate more effectively? And are there ways for us to resource that? So that was bucket number two.

Third is data. Although we put forward a data initiative that is beginning to gather information about what's happening in police departments so that they can do a better job managing their force and ensure that what they're doing is effective, and so that communities can feel confident that they know what's happening with police forces, generally speaking, police departments, sheriffs' departments, law enforcement offices around the country either don't have good data collection or it's just in a form that people can't use.

Now, I don't necessarily fault all the departments on that because I know here in the Federal Government, with all the resources we have, it has been really hard to just get our data systems and IT and all that set up. Some of you may remember, we had a little problem with my health care initiative—[*laughter*]—when it came to data and computers and so forth. So imagine if you've got a small county, small budget, they've got old computers, they don't know how to work systems. But this is an area where we think we can actually make real progress, is to help departments all across the country to put their data in a way that they can use, but also creates greater systems of accountability and so we understand what happens.

And the—one of the encouraging things for me is, is that this is an area, when I was a State legislature, I was able to work with the Fraternal Order of Police and the State police organizations, as well as activists, to create a racial profiling bill that gathered data and allowed law enforcement to identify where do they think there's a problem. And because of that cooperation, we've seen improvement in Illinois around these areas. And that's something that I think we all have to spend some time thinking about.

Next, we're going to continue to examine how we, as a Federal Government, can work effectively with local communities, because we've got 1,800—18,000 different law enforcement entities, and we're not going to be able to do for a sheriff's department or a police department what it needs to be doing. What are the best ways for us to help them do the right thing when they want to do the right thing? And are there ways in which we can support communities to lift up problems when departments are unwilling to adopt some of the best practices that are out there? So we're going to spend time looking on that.

And finally, there was broad agreement that this needs to be sustained. I didn't hear anybody around this table suggest that this problem is going to be solved overnight. Because the roots of the problems we saw this week date back not just decades, date back centuries. There are cultural issues, and there are issues of race in this country and poverty and a whole range of problems that will not be solved overnight. But what we can do is to set up the kinds of respectful conversations that we've had here—not just in Washington, but around the country—so that we institutionalize a process of continually getting better and holding ourselves accountable and holding ourselves responsible for getting better.

And I think we've done that with the Task Force. But what's been apparent is, is that it's not enough just or us to have a Task Force or report and then follow up through our departments. We have to push this out into communities so that they feel ownership for some of the good ideas that have been floated around this table.

So I just want to say how encouraged I am by the conversation. To the American people, I want you to know that this is a pretty representative group of the folks who've been involved in the debate in this issue and have practical knowledge and are thinking each and every day about how we can prevent the tragedies we saw in Baton Rouge and in Minnesota and in Dallas. And the conversation that took place

around this table is very different than the one that you see on a day-to-day or hourly basis in the media.

And one of the things that I encouraged everybody here to do was to try to be as thoughtful and respectful outside of this room as folks were to each other during the course of this conversation, because I think the American people would feel more encouraged.

Now, as I said yesterday, I do not want to gloss over the fact that not only are there very real problems, but there are still deep divisions about how to solve these problems. There's no doubt that police departments still feel embattled and unjustly accused. And there is no doubt that minority communities, communities of color still feel like it just takes too long to do what's right. And the pace of change is going to feel too fast for some and too slow for others. And sadly, because this is a huge country that is very diverse and we have a lot of police departments, I think it is fair to say that we will see more tension in police—between police and communities this month, next month, next year, and for quite some time.

The one thing, I think, we all have to do, though, is not paper over those differences or paper over those problems, but we do have to try to constructively solve them and not simply win talking-point arguments and not just give voice to what we're feeling at the moment. We have to, as a country, sit down and just grind it out, solve these problems. And I think they—if we have that kind of sustained commitment, I'm confident we can do so. All right?

So thank you all for participating. It was a terrific conversation. And they've all promised to take Michelle's call if she's wondering why I was late for dinner. [*Laughter*] All right?

Q. Mr. President——

The President. Thank you, guys. If I start taking questions, I think it's fair to say that I'm going to not get out of here, and we're already way late. Thank you, guys. Appreciate it. Thank you. Got a whole town hall tomorrow.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:49 p.m. in Room 350 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Charles H. Ramsey and Laurie Robinson, Cochairs, President's Task Force on 21st-Century Policing. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the audio was incomplete.

Statement on the First Anniversary of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action To Prevent Iran From Obtaining a Nuclear Weapon
July 14, 2016

Today marks one year since the conclusion of the Iran nuclear deal—known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)—by representatives of the United States, Iran, France, the United Kingdom, Germany, China, Russia, and the European Union. Over the last year, the Iran deal has succeeded in rolling back Iran's nuclear program, avoiding further conflict, and making us safer.

During the past year, Iran has implemented its nuclear-related commitments, as verified by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Iran has shipped out 98 percent of its enriched uranium, dismantled two-thirds of its centrifuges, filled its plutonium production reactor with concrete, and adopted the most intrusive inspection and verification program ever negotiated for a nuclear program. IAEA reports have confirmed that Iran is complying with its commitments. As a result, all of Iran's pathways to a nuclear weapon remain closed, and Iran's breakout time has been extended from 2 to 3 months to about a year. The United States and our negotiating partners have also fully implemented our commitments to lift nuclear-related sanctions, and we will continue to uphold our commitments as long as Iran continues to abide by the deal.

The JCPOA demonstrates what can be achieved by principled diplomacy and a sustained commitment to stopping the spread of nuclear weapons. America's willingness to engage

directly with Iran opened the door to talks, which led to the international unity and sustained engagement that culminated in the JCPOA. We still have serious differences with Iran, but the United States, our partners, and the world are more secure because of the JCPOA.

Remarks at a Reception for Members of the Diplomatic Corps
July 15, 2016

Good afternoon, everyone. I just had the opportunity to greet each of you in person. And we welcome all of you. Each year, the diplomatic corps comes so that we can say thank you for the partnership between our nations and our peoples and reaffirm our shared commitment to promoting security and peace and human dignity around the world.

Obviously, we come here with heavier hearts than normal. Overnight in Nice, we witnessed another tragic and appalling attack on the freedom and the peace that we cherish.

Today our hearts are with the people of France and with all the innocent men, women, and so many children who were hurt or killed in this sickening attack. This includes Americans that we know of: a family from Texas, a father and young son—just 11 years old—who were there on vacation. Their family, like so many others, are devastated. They're grieving. They need all the love and support of our American family as they grapple with an unimaginable loss and try to get through what are going to be very difficult days.

And so, on behalf of all of us, I think, I want to welcome our friend, Ambassador Araud of France. And I had a chance to meet with him right before I came out so that he knew that it's not just the United States of America, but the entire world that stands in solidarity with the people of France during this difficult time.

I spoke to President Hollande earlier today, and in addition to conveying deep condolences, I reminded him that France is America's oldest ally and one of our strongest. We owe our freedom to each other. Americans and French have stood together for two centuries. And I told President Hollande that we will stand united now: in our grief, in our praying for the many who are injured, many of whom are still fighting for their lives. And we pledge to stand with our French friends as we defend our nations against this scourge of terrorism and violence.

And this is a threat to all of us. We don't know all the details, but what we know is the capacity of even a single individual to do extraordinary harm to our people, to our way of life. A lot of nations represented here today have been impacted this year and in previous years. In recent weeks, we've seen heinous attacks, inspired or directed by ISIL, here in the United States, in Turkey, in Iraq, in Bangladesh, in Saudi Arabia. And these terrorists are targeting and killing innocent people of all backgrounds and all faiths, including Muslims. And I know I speak for all of us when I say that these individuals and these networks are an affront to all of our humanity.

Many of the nations that are represented here today are part of our global coalition against ISIL. And I want to take this opportunity to say once more: We will not be deterred. We will not relent. We're going to keep working together to prevent attacks and defend our homeland. We are going to keep taking out ISIL leaders and pushing ISIL back in Syria and Iraq. We're going to keep standing with our partners, from Africa to Afghanistan. And we are going to destroy this vile terrorist organization.

And in contrast to these terrorists, who only know how to kill and destroy, we're going to win this fight by building; by never giving up on diplomacy to end the Syrian civil war; by working with partners around the world, including Muslim communities, to push back against hateful ideologies that twist and distort Islam, a religion that teaches peace and justice and compassion. We will defeat these ideologies by offering a better vision of development and economic progress, so people, especially young people, have more hope and opportunity and are less susceptible to extremism and vi-

olence in the first place. And we will continue to promote political opportunity and democracy so citizens have a say in their future.

And we will win this fight by staying true to our values: values of pluralism and rule of law and diversity and freedoms—like the freedom of religion, freedom of speech and assembly—the very freedoms that the people of Nice were celebrating last night on Bastille Day. In the wake of last night's attacks, we've heard more suggestions that all Muslims in America be targeted, tested for their beliefs; some deported or jailed. And the very suggestion is repugnant and an affront to everything that we stand for as Americans.

We cannot give in to fear or turn on each other or sacrifice our way of life. We cannot let ourselves be divided by religion, because that's exactly what the terrorists want. We should never do their work for them. And here in the United States, our freedoms—including freedom of religion—help keep us strong and safe, and we have to be vigilant and defend our security and our freedoms.

And all of us, whatever nations we represent here, I think have to step back and reflect on what we are doing to eliminate this kind of chronic violence. It's been a difficult several weeks here in the United States. But the divide that exists is not between races and ethnicities and religions; it is between people who recognize the common humanity of all people and are willing to build institutions that promote that common humanity, and those who do not—those who would suggest that somebody is less than them because of their tribe or their ethnicity or their faith or their color. And those impulses exist in all our countries. And those impulses, when we do not speak out against them and build strong institutions to protect people from those impulses, they can take over, they can be unleashed. So that all of us have responsibilities, not just a few.

I want to say that even as we are relentless against terrorists, it's also worthy for us to recognize that our nations have worked together for security and peace and human dignity around the world. I want to thank so many of your countries for the partnership that we've forged and the progress that we've achieved together over these past 8 years: in rescuing the global economy and securing vulnerable nuclear materials; a comprehensive deal to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon; halting the spread of Ebola, and thereby saving countless lives; in Paris, the most ambitious agreement in history to fight climate change; a new sustainable development set of goals to end extreme poverty and promote health and education and equality for all people, including women.

And through the efforts of many of you, we've continued to try to move beyond old conflicts: supporting the transition to democracy in Burma, forging a new partnership in Vietnam, deepening our new chapter of engagement with the Cuban people, helping to support the efforts in Colombia to end the decades-long conflict. That's the power of diplomacy. That's what's possible when our nations and our peoples work together in the spirit of mutual interest and mutual respect.

And what a contrast to the death and nihilism that terrorists offer. What a powerful reminder of the progress and opportunity and hope that we can advance when, as nations and as peoples and as individuals, we refuse to be defined by our differences alone, and we remember that we are all part of one human race. Even on difficult days like this, that's what gives me hope. And that's what should give us all hope. Because on this planet of more than 7 billion people, the hatred and the violence of a few ultimately is no match for the love and decency and hard work of people of good will and compassion, so long as we stand up for those values and so long as we answer those who would undermine those values.

I'm very proud of the work that we've done over these last 7½ years in partnership with your countries. And so long as I have the privilege of being the President of the United States, I will continue to stand alongside you to promote those values all across the world.

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:53 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lakeway, TX, resident Sean Copeland and his son Brodie, who were

killed in the terrorist attack at a Bastille Day celebration in Nice, France, on July 14; and France's Ambassador to the U.S. Gerard Araud. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Deployment of United States Armed Forces Personnel to Uganda
July 15, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

As reported on July 13, in response to the security situation in South Sudan, I ordered the deployment of additional U.S. Armed Forces personnel to South Sudan to support the security of U.S. personnel and of our Embassy in Juba and the pre-positioning in Djibouti of additional U.S. Armed Forces prepared to support the security of U.S. citizens and property in South Sudan. Beginning on July 14, 2016, up to approximately 200 U.S. Armed Forces with appropriate combat equipment, including those forces initially pre-positioned in Djibouti, are pre-positioning in Uganda for this purpose.

It is not possible to know at this time the precise scope or the duration of the deployments of U.S. Armed Forces necessary to support the security of U.S. citizens and property in South Sudan.

I have directed this action consistent with my responsibility to protect U.S. citizens both at home and abroad, and in furtherance of U.S. national security and foreign policy interests, pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93–148). I appreciate the support of the Congress in these actions.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Orrin G. Hatch, President pro tempore of the Senate.

The President's Weekly Address
July 16, 2016

Hi, everybody. It's been a challenging couple of weeks: the shootings in Minnesota and Baton Rouge, the protests, the targeting and murder of police officers in Dallas. It's left all of us struggling to make sense of things at times. Now, I know that for many, it can feel like the deepest faultlines of our democracy have suddenly been exposed and even widened.

But the America I know—the America I saw this week—is just not as divided as some folks try to insist. I saw it on Monday, when I met with law enforcement to talk about the challenges they face and how too often, we ask our police to do too much: to be social workers and teachers and guardians and drug counselors as well.

I saw it on Tuesday, when I traveled to Dallas for the memorial service for the five courageous officers who died in the line of duty, even as they were protecting protesters with whom they may have disagreed.

I saw it on Wednesday, when I hosted police chiefs, Black Lives Matter's activists, State and local leaders, and others for a discussion that lasted more than 4 hours, a discussion on more steps we can take to continue supporting the police who keep our streets safe and instill confidence that the law applies to everyone equally.

And I saw it on Thursday, at a town hall in DC, where we talked about how there is no contradiction between honoring police and recognizing the racial disparities that exist in our criminal justice system and trying to fix those discrepancies.

Now, these conversations were candid, they were challenging, even uncomfortable sometimes. But that's the point. We have to be able to talk about these things honestly and openly, not just in the comfort of our own circles, but with folks who look differently and think differently than we do. Otherwise, we'll never break this dangerous cycle. And that's what America's all about: not just finding policies that work, but forging consensus, fighting cynicism, and finding the political will to keep changing this country for the better.

That's what America gives us, all of us: the capacity to change. It won't happen overnight. The issues we're grappling with go back decades, even centuries. But if we can open our hearts to try and see ourselves in one another, if we can worry less about which side has been wronged and worry more about joining sides to do right, as equal parts of one American family, then I'm confident that together, we will lead our country to a better day.

Thanks, everybody, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 11:40 a.m. on July 15 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on July 16. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 15, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on July 16. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks on the Shooting of Law Enforcement Officers in Baton Rouge, Louisiana

July 17, 2016

Good afternoon, everybody.

As all of you know now, this morning three law enforcement officers in Baton Rouge were killed in the line of duty. Three others were wounded. One is still in critical condition.

As of right now, we don't know the motive of the killer. We don't know whether the killer set out to target police officers or whether he gunned them down as they responded to a call. Regardless of motive, the death of these three brave officers underscores the danger that police across the country confront every single day. And we as a nation have to be loud and clear that nothing justifies violence against law enforcement. Attacks on police are an attack on all of us and the rule of law that makes society possible.

Now, earlier this afternoon I spoke with Governor Edwards and Mayor Holden, and I offered them the full support of the Federal Government and reiterated my full support for law enforcement in Baton Rouge and for police officers across the country. I also spoke to the Attorney General, and the FBI has already been on the scene. And through the work of all levels of government, justice will be done.

Most of all, our hearts go out to the families who are grieving. Our prayers go out to the officer who is still fighting for his life. This has happened far too often. And I've spent a lot of time with law enforcement this past week. I'm surrounded by the best of the best every single day. And I know whenever this happens, wherever this happens, you feel it. Your families feel it. But what I want you to know today is the respect and the gratitude of the American people for everything that you do for us.

And 5 days ago, I traveled to Dallas for the memorial service of the officers who were slain there. I said that that killer would not be the last person who tries to make us turn on each other. Nor will today's killer. It remains up to us to make sure that they fail. That decision is all of ours: the decision to make sure that our best selves are reflected across America, not our worst—that's up to us.

We have our divisions, and they are not new. Around-the-clock news cycles and social media sometimes amplify these divisions, and I know we're about to enter a couple of weeks of conventions where our political rhetoric tends to be more overheated than usual.

And that is why it is so important that everyone—regardless of race or political party or profession, regardless of what organizations you are a part of—everyone right now focus on words and actions that can unite this country rather than divide it further. We don't need inflammatory rhetoric. We don't need careless accusations thrown around to score political points or to advance an agenda. We need to temper our words and open our hearts, all of us. We need what we saw in Dallas this week, as a community came together to restore order and deepen unity and understanding. We need the kind of efforts we saw this week in meetings between community leaders and police—some of which I participated in—where I saw people of good will pledge to work together to reduce violence throughout all of our communities. That's what's needed right now. And it is up to all of us to make sure we are part of the solution and not part of the problem.

Someone once wrote, "A bullet need happen only once, but for peace to work, we need to be reminded of its existence again and again and again."

My fellow Americans, only we can prove, through words and through deeds, that we will not be divided. And we're going to have to keep on doing it "again and again and again." That's how this country gets united. That's how we bring people of good will together. Only we can prove that we have the grace and the character and the common humanity to end this kind of senseless violence, to reduce fear and mistrust within the American family, to set an example for our children.

And that's who we are, and that's who we always have the capacity to be. And that's the best way for us to honor the sacrifice of the brave police officers who were taken from us this morning.

May God bless them and their families, and may God bless the United States of America. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:03 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Ofc. Matthew Gerald and Cpl. Montrell Jackson, Baton Rouge Police Department, and Deputy Brad Garafola, East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office, who were killed in the shooting in Baton Rouge, LA; Deputies Bruce Simmons and Nicholas Tullier, East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office, and Ofc. Brad Montgomery, Baton Rouge Police Department, who were injured in the shooting; Gavin Eugene Long, suspected gunman in the shooting; and author Colum McCann. The related proclamation of July 18 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Shooting of Law Enforcement Officers in Baton Rouge, Louisiana

July 17, 2016

I condemn, in the strongest sense of the word, the attack on law enforcement in Baton Rouge. For the second time in 2 weeks, police officers who put their lives on the line for ours every day were doing their job when they were killed in a cowardly and reprehensible assault. These are attacks on public servants, on the rule of law, and on civilized society, and they have to stop.

I've offered my full support, and the full support of the Federal Government, to Governor Edwards, Mayor Holden, the Sheriff's Office, and the Baton Rouge Police Department. And make no mistake: Justice will be done.

We may not yet know the motives for this attack, but I want to be clear: there is no justification for violence against law enforcement. None. These attacks are the work of cowards

who speak for no one. They right no wrongs. They advance no causes. The officers in Baton Rouge, the officers in Dallas, they were our fellow Americans, part of our community, part of our country, with people who loved and needed them, and who need us now—all of us—to be at our best.

Today, on the Lord's day, all of us stand united in prayer with the people of Baton Rouge, with the police officers who've been wounded, and with the grieving families of the fallen. May God bless them all.

NOTE: The statement referred to Ofc. Matthew Gerald and Cpl. Montrell Jackson, Baton Rouge Police Department, and Deputy Brad Garafola, East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office, who were killed in the shooting in Baton Rouge, LA; and Deputies Bruce Simmons and Nicholas Tullier, East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office, and Ofc. Brad Montgomery, Baton Rouge Police Department, who were injured in the shooting. The related proclamation of July 18 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks on Presenting the Medal of Honor to Lieutenant Colonel Charles S. Kettles

July 18, 2016

Good morning, everybody. Please have a seat.

Welcome to the White House. Of all the privileges of this office, none is greater than serving as the Commander in Chief of the finest military that the world has ever known. And of all the military decorations that our Nation can bestow, we have none higher than the Medal of Honor.

As many who know him have said, nobody deserves it more than Charles Kettles of Ypsilanti, Michigan. Many believe that, except for Chuck. [*Laughter*] As he says, this "seems like a hell of a fuss over something that happened 50 years ago." [*Laughter*]

Even now, all these years later, Chuck is still defined by the humility that shaped him as a soldier. At 86 years old, he still looks sharp as a tack in that uniform. I pointed out, he obviously has not gained any weight. [*Laughter*] And his life is as American as they come. He's the son of an immigrant. His father signed up to fly for the United States the day after Pearl Harbor and filled his five boys with a deep sense of duty to their country. For a time, he even served in the Army Reserve—for a time, even as he served in the Army Reserve, Chuck ran a Ford dealership with his brother. And to families who drove a new car off that lot, he's the salesman who helped put an American icon in their driveway.

To the aviation students at Eastern Michigan University, Chuck is the professor who taught them about the wonder of flight in the country that invented it. To the constituents he served as a rare Republican in his hometown's mostly Democratic city council—[*laughter*]—Chuck is the public servant who made sure that their voices were heard. And to Ann, his beautiful bride, who grew up literally as the girl next door, Chuck is a devoted husband. Next March they will celebrate their 40th anniversary. So happy early anniversary.

So, in a lot of ways, Chuck Kettles is America. And to the dozens of American soldiers that he saved in Vietnam half a century ago, Chuck is the reason they lived and came home and had children and grandchildren, entire family trees made possible by the actions of this one man.

We are honored to be joined not only by Ann, but also 8 of Chuck and Ann's 10 children, and 3 of their grandchildren. It's the Kettles family reunion here in the White House. [*Laughter*] We're also honored to be joined by Chuck's brothers-in-arms from Vietnam and some of Chuck's newest comrades, members of the Medal of Honor Society.

May 15, 1967, started as a hot Monday morning. Soldiers from the 101st Airborne were battling hundreds of heavily armed North Vietnamese in a rural riverbed. Our men were

outnumbered. They needed support fast, helicopters to get the wounded out and bring more soldiers into the fight. Chuck Kettles was a helo pilot. And just as he'd volunteered for Active Duty, on this morning he volunteered his Hueys, even though he knew the danger. They called this place "Chump Valley" for a reason: Above the riverbed rose a 1,500-foot-tall hill, and the enemy was dug into an extensive series of tunnels and bunkers, the ideal spot for an ambush.

But Chuck jumped into the cockpit and took off. Around 9 a.m., his company of Hueys approached the landing zone and looked down. They should have seen a stand of green trees; instead, they saw a solid wall of green enemy tracers coming right at them. None of them had ever seen fire that intense. Soldiers in the helos were hit and killed before they could even leap off. But under withering fire, Chuck landed his chopper and kept it there, exposed, so the wounded could get on and so that he could fly them back to base.

A second time, Chuck went back into the valley. He dropped off more soldiers and supplies, picked up more wounded. Once more, machine-gun bullets and mortar rounds came screaming after them. As he took off a second time, rounds pierced the arm and leg of Chuck's door gunner, Roland Scheck. Chuck's Huey was hit. Fuel was pouring out as he flew away. But Chuck had wounded men aboard and decided to take his chances. He landed, found another helicopter, and flew Roland to the field hospital.

By now, it was near evening. Back in the riverbed, 44 American soldiers were still pinned down. The air was thick with gunpowder, smelled of burning metal. And then they heard a faint sound, and as the Sun started to set, they saw something rise over the horizon: six American helicopters—as one of them said, "as beautiful as could be." For a third time, Chuck and his unit headed into that hell on Earth. Death or injury was all but certain, a fellow pilot said later, and "a lesser person would not return." Once again, the enemy unloaded everything they had on Chuck as he landed: small arms, automatic weapons, rocket-propelled grenades.

Soldiers ran to the helicopters. When Chuck was told all were accounted for, he took off. And then, midair, his radio told him something else: Eight men had not made it aboard. They had been providing cover for the others. Those eight soldiers had run for the choppers, but could only watch as they floated away. "We all figured we were done for," they said. Chuck came to the same conclusion. "If we left them for 10 minutes," he said, "they'd be POWs or dead."

A soldier who was there said, "That day, Major Kettles became our John Wayne." [*Laughter*] With all due respect to John Wayne—[*laughter*]—he couldn't do what Chuck Kettles did. He broke off from formation, took a steep, sharp, descending turn back toward the valley, this time with no aerial or artillery support, a lone helicopter heading back in. Chuck's Huey was the only target for the enemy to attack, and they did. Tracers lit up the sky once more. Chuck became—Chuck came in so hot that his chopper bounced for several hundred feet before coming to a stop. As soon as he landed, a mortar round shattered his windshield. Another hit the main rotor blade. Shrapnel tore through the cockpit and Chuck's chair. And still, those eight soldiers started to sprint to the Huey, running through the firestorm, chased by bullets.

Chuck's helo, now badly damaged, was carrying 13 souls and was 600 pounds over limit. It felt, he said, like flying a 2½-ton truck. [*Laughter*] He couldn't hover long enough to take off. But cool customer that he is, he says he saw his shattered windshield and thought, "That's pretty good air conditioning." [*Laughter*] The cabin filled with black smoke as Chuck hopped and skipped the helo across the ground to pick up enough speed to takeoff, like a jackrabbit, he said, bouncing across the riverbed.

The instant he got airborne, another mortar ripped into the tail, the Huey fishtailed violently, and a soldier was thrown out of the helicopter, hanging onto a skid as Chuck flew them to safety. Couldn't make this up. [*Laughter*] This

is like a bad "Rambo" movie. [*Laughter*] Right? You're listening to this, you're—you can't believe it. [*Laughter*]

So the Army's warrior ethos is based on a simple principle: A soldier never leaves his comrades behind. Chuck Kettles honored that creed, not with a single act of heroism, but over and over and over. And because of that heroism, 44 American soldiers made it out that day—44. We are honored today to be joined by some of them: Chuck's door gunner who was hit, Roland Scheck; the last soldier Chuck rescued that day, the one who figured he was done for, Dewey Smith; and a number of soldiers, our Vietnam veterans, who fought in that battle. Gentlemen, I would ask you to either stand if you can or wave so that we can thank you for your service.

Now, Chuck's heroism was recognized at the time by the Army's second highest award for gallantry, the Distinguished Service Cross. But Bill Vollano decided Chuck deserved an upgrade. Bill is a retired social worker who went to Chuck's house to interview him for a Veterans History Project sponsored by the local Rotary Club. Ann overheard the interview from the other room and reminded Chuck to tell Bill the story I've just told all of you. So this is something Chuck and I have in common: We do what our wives tell us to do. [*Laughter*] Chuck told the story, and with his trademark humility, finished it by saying it was "a piece of cake." [*Laughter*]

Bill, hearing the story, knew it was something more, and he started a 5-year mission, along with Chuck's son Mike, a retired Navy pilot, to award Chuck the Medal of Honor. Bill and Mike are here, as is Congresswoman Debbie Dingell who, along with her legendary husband, John Dingell, went above and beyond to pass a law to make sure that even all these years later, we could still fully recognize Chuck Kettles' heroism, as we do today. So we thank them for their outstanding efforts.

And that's one more reason this story is quintessentially American: looking out for one another, the belief that nobody should be left behind. This is—this shouldn't just be a creed for our soldiers, it should be a creed for all of us. This is a country that's never finished in its mission to improve, to do better, to learn from our history, to work to form a more perfect Union. And at a time when, let's face it, we've had a couple of tough weeks, for us to remember the goodness and decency of the American people, and the way that we can all look out for each other, even when times are tough, even when the odds are against us—what a wonderful inspiration. What a great gift for us to be able to celebrate something like this.

It might take time, but having failed to give our veterans who fought in Vietnam the full measure of thanks and respect that they had earned, we acknowledge that our failure to do so was a shame. We resolve that it will never happen again. It can take time, but old adversaries can find peace. Thanks to the leadership of so many Vietnam vets who had the courage to rebuild ties, I was able to go to Vietnam recently and see a people as enthusiastic about America as probably any place in the world, crowds lining the streets. And we were able to say that, on a whole lot of issues, Vietnam and the United States are now partners. Here at home, it might take time, but we have to remember everyone on our team, just like Chuck Kettles. Sometimes, we have to turn around and head back and help those who need a lift.

Chuck says the most gratifying part of this whole story is that Dewey's name and Roland's name and the names of the 42 other Americans he saved are not etched in the solemn, granite wall not far from here that memorializes the fallen in the Vietnam war. Instead, it will be Chuck Kettles's name forever etched on the walls that communities have built from Southern California to South Carolina in honor of those who have earned the Medal of Honor.

Of course, Chuck says all this attention is "a lot of hubbub, but I'll survive." [*Laughter*] Chuck, you've survived much worse than this ceremony. [*Laughter*] And on behalf of the American people, let me say that this hubbub is richly and roundly deserved. As the Military Aide prepares to read the citation, please join me in saluting this proud American soldier and veteran who reminds us all of the true meaning of service: Lieutenant Colonel Chuck Kettles.

[*At this point, Lt. Cmdr. Richard I. Lawlor, USN, Navy Aide to the President, read the citation, and the President presented the medal, assisted by Lt. Col. Andrew C. Steadman, USA, Army Aide to the President. Following the presentation of the medal, Maj. Gen. Paul K. Hurley, USA, Army Chief of Chaplains, said a prayer.*]

Ladies and gentlemen, that concludes the ceremony, but we have a reception. I hear the food here is pretty good. [*Laughter*] Let's give one more round of applause to Mr. Chuck Kettles.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:14 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Ypsilanti, MI, resident William Vollano, a local Veterans History Project coordinator for the Library of Congress's American Folklife Center; and former Rep. John D. Dingell, Jr. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the reading of the citation.

Letter to the Nation's Law Enforcement Community on the Shootings of Law Enforcement Officers in Dallas, Texas, and Baton Rouge, Louisiana
July 18, 2016

To the brave members of our Nation's law enforcement community:

Every day, you confront danger so it does not find our families, carry burdens so they do not fall to us, and courageously meet test after test to keep us safe. Like Dallas officer Lorne Ahrens, who bought dinner for a homeless man the night before he died, you perform good deeds beyond the call of duty and out of the spotlight. Time and again, you make the split-second decisions that could mean life or death for you and many others in harm's way. You endure the tense minutes and long hours over lifetimes of service.

Every day, you accept this responsibility and you see your colleagues do their difficult, dangerous jobs with equal valor. I want you to know that the American people see it too. We recognize it, we respect it, we appreciate it, and we depend on you. And just as your tight-knit law enforcement family feels the recent losses to your core, our Nation grieves alongside you. Any attack on police is an unjustified attack on all of us.

I've spent a lot of time with law enforcement over the past couple of weeks. I know that you take each of these tragedies personally, and that each is as devastating as a loss in the family. Sunday's shooting in Baton Rouge was no different. Together, we mourn Montrell Jackson, Matthew Gerald, and Brad Garafola. Each was a husband. Each was a father. Each was a proud member of his community. And each fallen officer is one too many. Last week, I met with the families of the Dallas officers who were killed, and I called the families of those who were killed in the line of duty yesterday in Baton Rouge. I let them know how deeply we ache for the loss of their loved ones.

Some are trying to use this moment to divide police and the communities you serve. I reject those efforts, for they do not reflect the reality of our Nation. Officer Jackson knew this too, when just days ago he asked us to keep hatred from our hearts. Instead, he offered—to protestors and fellow police officers alike—a hug to anyone who saw him on the street. He offered himself as a fellow worshipper to anyone who sought to pray. Today we offer our comfort and our prayers to his family, to the Geralds and the Garafolas, and to the tight-knit Baton Rouge law enforcement community.

As you continue to serve us in this tumultuous hour, we again recognize that we can no longer ask you to solve issues we refuse to address as a society. We should give you the resources you need to do your job, including our full-throated support. We must give you the tools you need to build and strengthen the bonds of trust with those you serve, and our best efforts to address the underlying challenges that contribute to crime and unrest.

As you continue to defend us with quiet dignity, we proclaim loudly our appreciation for the acts of service you perform as part of your daily routine. When you see civilians at risk, you don't see them as strangers. You see them as your own family, and you lay your life on the line for them. You put others' safety before your own, and you remind us that loving our country means loving one another. Even when some protest you, you protect them. What is more professional than that? What is more patriotic? What is a prouder example of our most basic freedoms—to speech, to assembly, to life, and to liberty? And at the end of the day, you have a right to go home to your family, just like anybody else.

Robert Kennedy, once our Nation's highest-ranking law enforcement official, lamented in the wake of unjust violence a country in which we look at our neighbors as people "with whom we share a city, but not a community." This is a time for us to reaffirm that what makes us special is that we are not only a country, but also a community. That is true whether you are black or white, whether you are rich or poor, whether you are a police officer or someone they protect and serve.

With that understanding—an understanding of the goodness and decency I have seen of our Nation not only in the past few weeks, but throughout my life—we will get through this difficult time together.

We will do it with the love and empathy of public servants like those we have lost in recent days. We will do it with the resilience of cities like Dallas that quickly came together to restore order and deepen unity and understanding. We will do it with the grace of loved ones who even in their grief have spoken out against vengeance toward police. We will do it with the good will of activists like those I have sat with in recent days, who have pledged to work together to reduce violence even as they voice their disappointments and fears.

As we bind up our wounds, we must come together to ensure that those who try to divide us do not succeed. We are at our best when we recognize our common humanity, set an example for our children of trust and responsibility, and honor the sacrifices of our bravest by coming together to be better.

Thank you for your courageous service. We have your backs.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: This letter was posted on Facebook by the National Fraternal Order of Police on July 18 and released by the Office of the Press Secretary as a White House blog post on July 19. The letter referred to Dallas, TX, resident Bill Connor. The related proclamations of July 8 and July 18 are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch, Federal Bureau of Investigation Director James B. Comey, Jr., and Department of Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh C. Johnson
July 19, 2016

We just had a useful discussion, following up on the Task Force meeting that I had last week, as well as a number of conversations that we've had with various stakeholders in the wake of the tragic events that we've seen over the last couple of weeks.

Obviously, the loss of three more police officers in Baton Rouge over the weekend, three of them still wounded, one critically wounded—and we're praying for him as we speak—right on the heels of Dallas indicates the degree to which it is very important for us to do everything we can to help police officers go home at night and to be safe. And as I said the other night, it's a reminder of the extraordinary risks and dangers that they are taking every single day to protect us and our way of life.

And as has been consistent throughout all the conversations I've had over the last several weeks, I strongly believe that there is no contradiction between us protecting our officers, honoring our officers, making sure that they have all the tools they need to do their job safely, and building trust between police officers and departments in the communities that they serve. In fact, those things are complementary and not contradictory.

And the more we can do to make sure that communities feel that these are their police departments and that they have a interest in protecting them, the easier it's going to be for police officers to do their jobs.

The good news is that, thanks to the leadership of Attorney General Lynch, FBI Director Comey, as well as Secretary Jeh Johnson at DHS, we do have a toolkit of best practices, of training, of resources and equipment that can help police departments protect their officers, make sure that they can do their jobs. But we're going to have to do more than we already are doing.

And some of that is engaging at the local level, because this cannot just be a Federal, top-down initiative, this has to be a local initiative in the 18,000 law enforcement jurisdictions that are out there all across the country. And it also has to be resourced. We were talking—just to give you a few examples—about the great interest on the part of police departments around the country in training for safety, deescalation, dealing with active-shooter cases. Unfortunately, not all those departments that want to train their officers have the resources to do it. And the Justice Department has programs that can be made available, but we don't have enough coverage, not as much as we'd like.

Something as basic as bulletproof vests, large numbers of departments do have bulletproof vests for all their officers on patrol and in situations where there's significant risk, but there are a number of places where they're still short of bulletproof vests. That can make a difference.

And so my intention over the next several months, as long as I'm in this office, is to continue to look at best practices, figure out what's working well; listen to our police departments in how we can help them engage the community, build up trust. What kind of equipment do they need? What kind of training do they need? What kind of recruitment strategies that—do they need? And then to do everything we can to convene all parties concerned, including Congress, to make sure that they can get those resources.

And we are going to continue, building off the Task Force report and the meeting that we had last week, to encourage the kinds of conversations between police departments and communities so that we can incorporate—as part of a strategy to make the lives of police officers safer—encourage the kind of best practices that assure communities are embracing their police departments the way they should and the way they need to.

So I appreciate the efforts that have already taken place. We've got a lot more work to do. I want to repeat, this is not something that we're going to be able to do solely from this office or from the Justice Department or the FBI or the Department of Homeland Security. This is something that's going to have to be bottom up and not just top down.

But the fact that in the wake of this tragedy, we've seen over the course of several weeks much more constructive conversations and the offering up of very concrete recommendations and suggestions for how we can do better is encouraging to me.

All right? Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:35 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Ofc. Matthew Gerald and Cpl. Montrell Jackson, Baton Rouge Police Department, and Deputy Brad Garafola, East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office, who were killed in the shooting in Baton Rouge, LA, on July 17; and Deputies Bruce Simmons and Nicholas Tullier, East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office, and Ofc. Brad Montgomery, Baton Rouge Police Department, who were injured in the shooting.

Remarks at the White House Summit on Global Development
July 20, 2016

The President. Thank you! Thank you, everybody. Thank you. Everybody, please have a seat. Thank you so much. Well, thank you, Strive, for those kind words and your great work to promote opportunity in Africa and across the globe. I should point out, by the way, Strive just told me he was in the middle of a board meeting, he flew here, he's got to go back. He hasn't gotten any sleep. That's how committed he is to the work that we're doing. So give Strive a big round of applause.

So this is quite a group. [*Laughter*] Just a lot of do-gooders in one room. [*Laughter*] That's good. Just own it. [*Laughter*] You should be proud of it. I want to welcome our partners from around the world. We've got leaders from government, from the private sector, civil society, faith communities who are doing great work, and so many inspiring young people. And I want to thank our partners in Congress from both sides of the aisle who prove that every once in a while, in a city that doesn't agree on much—[*laughter*]—we can all agree on the imperative of smart development. So thank you. Thank you.

Obviously, this has been a tough couple of weeks, not just here in the United States, but around the world. And that's being amplified to some degree during political season. So I think maybe it's worth stepping back for a moment. This is a challenging time, with threats of terrorism, an international order that is buffeted by all kinds of different events, a sense that globalization is leaving too many people behind, and expanding inequality within countries, even if we are seeing progress in the aggregate.

And all of this creates legitimate fears and anxieties that have to be addressed and, at least a feeling, a perception that people don't have full control over a rapidly changing world. So it is worth reminding ourselves of how lucky we are to be living in the most peaceful, most prosperous, most progressive era in human history.

Now, that's hard to absorb if we're watching the newscasts every night, because there's heartbreak and terrible things taking place at any given moment across the globe. But it's important for us to remember, not so that we become complacent, but so that we understand that good works can make a difference. Think about it. It has been decades since a war between major powers. More people live in democracies. More people are linked by technology. Thanks in part to the dedication and passion and hard work of so many of the people who are gathered here today, in recent decades, the world has achieved incredible advances in development and human dignity.

We've saved over 60 million lives from measles and malaria and tuberculosis. We've slashed HIV/AIDS infections and deaths. Across the developing world, incomes have gone up. Tens of millions of boys and girls are in school. Millions have gained access to clean energy, helping to mitigate the threat of climate change. In just the past 25 years, more than 1 billion people have been lifted out of extreme poverty—1 billion. Michael Elliott, the former head of the ONE Campaign, who we remember today—he liked to say that we're living through an "age of miracles." And he's right.

And sometimes, when I'm talking to young interns at the White House who are still immunizing themselves from the cynicism that's so chronic in this town—[*laughter*]—I remind them, if you had to choose a moment in history to be born and you didn't know ahead of time who you were going to be, you'd choose now. [*Laughter*] Because the world has never been less violent, healthier, better educated, more tolerant, with more opportunity for more people, and more connected than it is today.

And all of you can take great pride in these historic achievements. It's a testament to what's possible when we work together: governments, multilateral institutions, the private sector, and civil society. And it is a testament to our shared commitment to the dignity of every

human being. This is something I was nursed on. Some of you know my mother worked with USAID and the Ford Foundation, traveling places like Indonesia and Pakistan, working to help lift up the rural poor, particularly women. It's something that I tried to apply myself as a young grassroots organizer on the South Side of Chicago, working with people who wanted to expand hopes and opportunity and jobs in forgotten neighborhoods.

I've seen the possibilities of progress, and so have all of you. And yet we are humbled by the work that remains. When some 800 million men, women, and children subsist on less than $1.25 a day, when 11 boys and girls are dying every minute from mostly preventable causes, when hundreds of women are dying every day from having a baby—when all this is happening right before our eyes, we know we've got a lot of work to do.

And so today we reaffirm our belief that in the 21st century, no child should go to bed hungry and no child should die from a mosquito bite and no one should be denied opportunity because of where they're born or what gender or religion they are or the color of their skin or who they love. All of us are born equal, and we're all connected. And if a schoolhouse door is closed to a young girl, then we're all diminished. And when a mother can't buy medicine for her sick child, or a family flees violence, whether in Syria or El Salvador, in a sense, that makes us all poorer and all less secure. That's what we believe; that's what brings us here together.

And just as our values compel us to act, so do pragmatism, so does self-interest. When there are no roads to take goods to market, and when corruption steals from an entrepreneur or siphons off billions that could be going to schools and hospitals and infrastructure, that keeps too many people in too many countries from joining our global economy.

And there's a reason why Susan Rice, my National Security Adviser, is with us here today. There's a reason why our USAID Administrator, Gayle Smith—she of the spectacular hair—sits—[*laughter*]—there's a reason that Gayle sits alongside generals in the Situation Room when we're talking about critical national security issues. Because we know there is a correlation between no education, no jobs, no hope, the violation of basic human dignity, and conflict and instability. So development isn't charity. It's one of the smartest investments we can make in our shared future: in our security and our prosperity.

And sometimes, that's a tough argument to make here in the United States, where we have big needs and there are kids going hungry in this country and don't have good enough schools in this country and have insufficient shelter in this country. Sometimes, people feel like, well, why are we making investments anyplace else? And yet we don't question hundreds of billions of dollars of investment in our military. And I could not be prouder as Commander in Chief to have the world's best military and the best military in human history, and it's needed. And sometimes, we have to make sure that we're addressing those who would do us harm.

But for us to make a fraction of that investment in schools and clean water and health care—that's why we do it. It's not because we're not mindful of the needs here in this country; it's because if we make those investments, we're also going to be in a better position to protect our country and improve our country. And this is why, as President, I've elevated development as a key pillar of American foreign policy. With the help of many of you, we've established our new global development policy, and we've transformed the way we do business.

We changed how we measure development, not just by the dollars we invest—although, we still invest a lot of dollars—but by whether people and nations are actually better off as a consequence of those investments. Instead of government going it alone, we've deepened partnerships with multilateral organizations and civil society and the private sector and faith communities and, most importantly, people on the ground. Instead of just sending foreign aid, we're leveraging new sources of funding, committing and mobilizing more than $100 billion from the private sector and other

partners to promote development and save lives.

And in the fight against poverty, we're treating governments as partners, not charity cases. Instead of top-down approaches, we're building local capacity, because local partners have to be in the lead.

So the United States continues to be the world's largest donor of humanitarian aid, and it will remain so as long as I'm President, and—[*laughter*]. And it will remain so, I'm confident, in the next administration. But instead of just responding after crises happen, what we've been focused on is helping communities and countries build resilience to shocks and to be in a position to avoid crises, because we have to be hardheaded and big hearted at the same time. And in doing so, we've ushered in a new era of accountability and results. For donor nations like the United States and for all of us who believe passionately in development, we've got to make every penny count. So we're holding our partners in developing nations to the same standard, no excuses. Waste, fraud, corruption—those are anathema to development.

And today we're here to celebrate the progress that we've made. We're here to keep the momentum going, guided by the new sustainable development goals, including our goal to end the outrage of extreme poverty.

So I may only have 6 months left in office, but I'm here to say that whoever the next President is, development has to remain a fundamental pillar of American foreign policy and a key part of our work to lift up lives, not just overseas, but here in the United States. If you care about human dignity, if you care about reducing violence and terrorism, if you care about fighting climate change, if you care about addressing inequality and creating trade and prosperity that works for all and not just some, then you're going to have to pay attention to development, and you're going to have to make an investment.

So that's what all of you have been doing. [*Laughter*] And I'm here to tell you, let's keep going. Let's keep unleashing broad-based growth that transforms economies and lifts people and nations from poverty and [to]* prosperity. People tell me around the world when I travel, developing nations, they do not just want aid, they want trade. They want capacity building. As we've seen from South Korea to Chile to Botswana, the developing nation of today can end up being the engine of global growth tomorrow.

So, having renewed the African Growth and Opportunity Act, moving ahead with the Trans-Pacific Partnership, we can make sure that trade and globalization delivers progress, not just for those at the top, but also for the many. We'll continue to partner with countries that embrace reforms and attract investment. And in November—in September, in New York, we're going to host the second U.S.-Africa Business Forum to keep promoting growth and innovation and investment across the continent.

Working with over 40 countries, we're bringing the wonders of technology to far corners of the globe, accelerating access to the Internet, bridging the digital divide. We've mobilized governments and multilateral institutions and more than 100 private sector partners around our Power Africa initiative, funding everything from big power plants to off-the-grid and small, renewable energy projects. And we are proving that countries don't have to choose between expanding access to power and combating climate change. These projects are expected to generate up to 29,000 megawatts of cleaner electricity so that students can study at night and businesses can stay open and farmers can use mechanized tools. And I believe that by 2030, we can bring electricity to over 60 million African homes and businesses. And that will be transformative for the entire continent.

And because economies can't thrive without rule of law, together let's keep fighting for good governance and strong, accountable institutions. That's the bedrock of sustainable development. You wouldn't know it sometimes,

* White House correction.

because in advanced countries sometimes, there's such antigovernment rhetoric. [*Laughter*] But it turns out, like, having functioning governments are really important. [*Laughter*]

So that's one of the reasons I committed the U.S. Government to more transparency on my very first day in office. And with our Open Government Partnership of 70 countries, representing some 2 billion people, we've continued to empower reformers and civil society, from Sierra Leone to Ukraine to Uruguay. Because governments should serve the people and not the other way around.

And by the way, progress is not in a straight line. It's not overnight. Just as here in the United States we've still got more reforms to make, that's true of a lot of countries that are participating. But we have seen this tool prodding governments in new directions, opening up, creating greater mechanisms of accountability, setting new norms that, over time, make a difference.

Together, let's keep strengthening food security and nutrition. No society can flourish—children can't flourish—if they're going hungry. We can't ask a child to feed her mind when she can barely feed her stomach. So, with our alliance between government and private sector and NGOs, we need to keep empowering farmers with new seeds and new technologies and new techniques that are scaled appropriately and sustainable. And it works.

Last year alone, we reached over 9 million farmers across the globe, reducing hunger, boosting yields, increasing incomes by more than $800 million. In many of the areas where we work, poverty has been cut by up to a quarter. Stunting is down by as much as a third. Nearly 18 million more children are getting better nutrition. And right before coming here, in the Oval Office, I signed into law the Global Food Security Act, which is a bipartisan bill. So the—[*applause*]. I—thank you. Thank you. I—you're not surprised I signed it, right? [*Laughter*] I mean, I—I mean, you guys are all excited about it. [*Laughter*] We've been working on this for a while. We got it passed, so it's my job to sign it. [*Laughter*] But this is a bipartisan bill that authorizes more than $7 billion so that initiatives like Feed the Future endure well into the future. So let's sustain this progress. Let's make hunger history.

Together, let's keep advancing global health and keep reforming health systems, empowering local communities, investing in new treatments and prevention. Building on the fine work of my predecessor, President George Bush, we've saved an estimated 6 million lives from malaria since the year 2000. In our fight against HIV/AIDS, we've nearly quadrupled the number of people receiving treatment since 2009. We're supporting 9.5 million people with lifesaving therapies. And I believe we can meet our goal of treating nearly 13 million people by the end of next year.

Our vision is within reach: the first AIDS-free generation. And with our commitment to infant and maternal health, we've helped save the lives of more than 4.5 million children and 200,000 mothers. Together, we beat back Ebola in West Africa. And with nearly 50 countries united around our Global Health Security Agenda, we're going to keep boosting our ability to prevent and detect and respond to outbreaks. And here, I do have to just add a little editorial. [*Laughter*] Republicans in Congress can help: Pass that bill that treats Zika like the serious threat that it is. Fully fund our response. That's an example of protecting America and helping other countries too. We can get that done.

And maybe, most of all, together, let's keep empowering our young people whose energy and enthusiasm and optimism can lift up countries, no matter how tough the circumstances. I have met so many young people all over the world that just inspire me. We joke sometimes that with all the grim stuff I have to deal with every day, get me in a room with some young people. [*Laughter*] The old heads get me depressed sometimes. [*Laughter*] Because they're ready to go to work. They need support, they need the skills, but we've already brought together nearly half a million young people through our Young Leaders Initiatives, from Africa and Southeast Asia and Europe and the Americas. And we want to keep helping them

connect and exchange ideas and expertise and best practices; keep giving them the tools to be the next great entrepreneurs, doctors, scientists; the next civil society leaders, maybe even future Presidents and Prime Ministers.

And as we're empowering young people, we've got to continue lifting up all our people, and that means men and women, boys and girls. I've said this before, I will keep repeating it: One of the best measures of a nation's success is how it treats its women. And earlier this month, we had a—the Obama women—[*laughter*]—Michelle and Sasha and Malia, they went and traveled with young women in Liberia and Morocco. Dr. Jill Biden is in Africa this week. And all—in all these trips, their message is simple: Let girls learn. Let girls learn so they can help start new ventures and drive economies. Let girls learn so that they can invest in their communities. Let girls learn so they can be safe from violence and abuse. Let girls learn so they can realize their dreams. Because when women have equal futures, families and communities and countries are stronger. When they get an education, that means their children are getting an education. This is a fact.

And we haven't made enough progress on this front. We've got to do more. Now, none of this is going to be easy. One of the messages I've been trying to deliver at commencements and other appearances around the country, as my Presidency comes to a close, is just reminding people, stuff is always hard. In fact, I have a plaque on my desk that says "hard things are hard." [*Laughter*] This was advice that was given to me by one of my senior advisers when we were in the middle of some big fight. [*Laughter*] He said, you know, here's the thing, Mr. President, hard things are hard. [*Laughter*] I said, that is profound. You're right. [*Laughter*]

But sometimes, we get disappointed in this age of instant gratification when we don't feel as if everything is solved. Well, we're here on this Earth just a blink of an eye, each of us. We take the world that's been given to us, and we try to make it just a little bit better, and then somebody else picks it up, and they do their part. And there are people who are trying to impede progress. And—but the good news is, is that the general trajectory of humanity is, is that the folks who have been trying to make progress have outnumbered those who haven't. And over time, things just get a little bit better, and it adds up.

But it's hard. And when President Kennedy said we'd go to the Moon, he said we chose to do it because it's hard. There's no point in doing easy stuff. [*Laughter*] Nearly 50 years ago today, a man first walked on the Moon. That was hard. And JFK once said that "The conquest of poverty is as difficult, if not more difficult, than the conquest of outer space." So we can't get discouraged. We can get frustrated sometimes. We may—at least if you're in the Oval Office—occasionally utter a curse word or two. [*Laughter*] But——

Audience member. Four more years! [*Laughter*]

The President. But we've got to stick with it. Because it's going to take years to reach our goals. But whenever the task seems too great, I am reminded—and I'm sure you are too—of all the people that I've met these past 8 years, the odds they've faced that pale in comparison to the challenges that we face, the promise they hold.

The young farmer in Senegal, who started with 1 hectare of land, grew that to 16, and boosted her incomes, and brought a tractor and suddenly was a employer and small-businessperson. And just hearing her talk about what had happened to her in a few years as a consequence of some of the work that the people in this room had done, that gives me hope. She gives me hope.

Or the young entrepreneur in Peru who is teaching rural women digital skills, and suddenly, they're employable, and they've got a whole new set of possibilities in front of them. Or the health care workers in the Bishop Tutu HIV/AIDS clinic in South Africa and the incredible work that they do with good cheer and unbelievable effort. And all the brave men and women with the virus who have overcome despair and are now living full and long lives and are giving something back—they give me hope.

And I think of all the citizens at the grassroots in countries around the world, in places where it's dangerous sometimes, who are pushing to hold governments accountable—lawyers who are monitoring elections and activists in civil society and innovators building platforms to enhance transparency—they give me hope.

All of you coming together from across sectors, working together: government, private sector, civil society, faith groups. Because you understand that despite whatever differences of religion or background or race or region, we are united as one human race and by our abiding commitment to the inherent dignity of every human being. All of you give me hope.

Just as you've had a partner in me and my administration, I'm confident that as we work for the prosperity and justice and peace that all of us seek in the world, as we reach people who may feel forgotten and bring hope to remote corners of this planet, I am absolutely convinced that you'll have a strong partner in the United States of America. We've shown this can work. Now we've just got to keep it up. All right?

Thank you very much, everybody. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:35 p.m. in Atrium Hall at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center. In his remarks, he referred to Strive Masiyiwa, founder and group executive chairman, Econet, who introduced the President; Jill T. Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden; former White House Senior Adviser David M. Axelrod; Nimna Diayté, president, Saloum Federation of Corn Producers; and Mariana Costa Checa, cofounder and executive director, Laboratoria. He also referred to S. 1252, which was approved July 20 and assigned Public Law No. 114–195; and H.R. 5243.

Statement on the Death of Representative K. Mark Takai
July 20, 2016

Michelle and I were saddened to learn of the passing of Representative Mark Takai today. Mark was always a fighter. It's the spirit he brought to more than two decades of public service on behalf of the people of Hawaii. He stood up for America's most vulnerable. He championed our troops and veterans and proudly wore our Nation's uniform. And his relentless push for cancer research inspired countless Americans fighting the same battle as him. Simply put, our country is better off because of Mark's contributions. He leaves a legacy of courage, of service, and of hope. Our thoughts and prayers are with Mark's wife Sami, their two children, and his many friends and family.

NOTE: The statement referred to Matthew and Kaila Takai, children of Rep. Takai.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Transnational Criminal Organizations
July 20, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to significant transnational criminal organizations declared in Executive Order 13581 of July 24, 2011, is to continue in effect beyond July 24, 2016.

The activities of significant transnational criminal organizations have reached such scope and gravity that they threaten the stability of international political and economic systems. Such organizations are becoming increasingly sophisticated and dangerous to the United States; they are increasingly entrenched in the operations of foreign governments and the international financial system, thereby weakening democratic institutions, degrading the rule of law, and undermining economic markets. These organizations facilitate and aggravate violent civil conflicts and increasingly facilitate the activities of other dangerous persons.

The activities of significant transnational criminal organizations continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13581 with respect to significant transnational criminal organizations.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Honoring the 2015 World Series Champion Kansas City Royals
July 21, 2016

The President. Thank you. Everybody, have a seat. Have a seat. Well, welcome to the White House, everybody. Let's give it up for the World Series Champions, the Kansas City Royals! I know many of you've been waiting a long time to hear this, so I'll say it again: the World Series Champion Kansas City Royals!

As you can tell, we've got quite a few Royals fans in the house, including some Members of Congress. I see some members of my Cabinet—[*laughter*]—as well as former Cabinet members. We're also proud to be joined by a true American patriot, a World War II veteran, and one of the finest public servants America has ever known, Senator Bob Dole. There you go.

I also want to recognize the Kansas City mayors from both sides of the border: Sly James—there he is—and Mark Holland. More importantly, Mark's son, Luke, shortstop on—what's the name of your team?

Luke Holland, son of Mayor Mark R. Holland of Kansas City, KS. The Braves.

The President. The Braves? Not the Atlanta Braves. [*Laughter*] Just want to be clear. But he's a shortstop. He—Skip, you may want to check out what he's got.

We're proud to have Royals owner David Glass and team president Dan Glass here. Give them a big round of applause. We've got General Manager Dayton Moore here. Two of the greatest Royals of all time, George Brett and Frank White. And the winningest manager in Royals history, give it up for Ned Yost!

Now, I'm not sure if anybody is aware of this, but my Press Secretary happens to be a Royals fan. [*Laughter*] Where's Josh? Yes, I know. There he is right in the front row. [*Laughter*] If you asked Josh to choose the best day of his life, I'm pretty sure he'd say his wedding day and the birth of his son. But this is close. [*Laughter*] It's really close. I notice he has his son here, training him—even though he's more interested right now in sucking his thumb—to be a proper Royals fan.

And let's face it, it's been a long road for Royals fans. There were some dark years, some tough decades. But that started to change when Dayton came to town in 2006. He coupled some of baseball's sharpest analytics minds with Ned's managerial style, which has produced a lot of wins, not to mention his own Twitter hashtag: hashtag #Yosted. [*Laughter*] All of which has combined to create one of the grittiest, most complete teams we've seen in a long time.

You've got an offense led by homegrown guys like Alex "Gordo" Gordon and Mike "Moose" Moustakas. Eric "Hoz" Hosmer. World [Series]* MVP Salvador "Salvy" Pérez. These guys are all great players. Can I say, though, the nicknames aren't that creative. [*Laughter*] You know, it's like, Barack "Barack" Obama. [*Laughter*] You know? I mean, listen to this—Hoz, Moose, Gordo, you know. [*Laughter*] We're going to have to work on these. [*Laughter*]

Also, lights-out bullpen with relievers like Wade Davis and Kelvin Herrera. You've got a speedy, athletic defense led by Alcides Escobar and Lorenzo Cain, who couldn't make it today.

Audience members. Aww.

The President. Aww.

At the plate, you've got guys who hardly ever strike out. They've been called basically the best contact team ever. So fast, once they're on base, they're able to squeeze out extra runs because as—I love this quote—as Jarrod Dyson puts it, "That's what speed do." That's what speed do. That was a good quote. [*Laughter*] That's what speed do.

And then, somehow, they find the time still to sneak Fetty Wap references into their press conferences. [*Laughter*] Josh, you haven't done that, have you?

White House Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest. No, I have not.

The President. Good, okay. [*Laughter*]

So you can see why Royals fans love this team so much. And I mean love this team. Eight hundred thousand people at a parade. That's like—[*applause*]. Last year, fans swamped the All-Star balloting process to the point that it looked like the entire starting lineup was going to be Royals. And as a Chicago guy, I appreciate that. Vote early, vote often. [*Laughter*] So that was good.

So, together, you guys have been on quite a ride. For two seasons, every playoff game seems like it's been a white-knuckle game: wild comeback against the A's 2 years ago; the rally in game 7 against the Giants that came up 90 feet short; last year, coming back from the Astros; down three against the Blue Jays; down in each of their World Series wins against the Mets. In all, they have had eight comeback wins in the playoffs, which is a Major League record.

And that includes game 5 of the World Series, ninth inning comeback capped by Hoz's gutsy dash home on an infield grounder. And then, in the 12th, in his first at bat of last year's postseason, Christian Colón clinched the Series with a pinch-hit, go-ahead single that opened up the floodgates.

And I think Christian's play—somebody who hadn't been used a lot, then suddenly coming up big when the moment arrived for him—that's exactly the "keep the line moving" mentality that's defined this team. Guys aren't in it for themselves; they're in it for each other, both on and off the diamond.

This spring, the Royals broke ground on their Urban Youth Academy in Kansas City, a place for young people to not only steer clear of drugs and gangs, but to also learn skills that can lead to a better future. And that means not just playing baseball, but learning about advanced stats and broadcasting and sports writing and having access to tutoring and internships, college prep, financial literacy courses. This is in keeping with the kind of efforts that we've been promoting with "My Brother's Keeper." And I just to want recognize Royals ownership as well as players—Gordy, Hoz, Salvy, Moose, Chris Young—who have donated millions of dollars toward supporting Kansas City's young people. They deserve a big round of applause for that. So—[*applause*].

And what's great is, the Academy is built right next to the Negro League Museum, so you can see the link between Jackie Robinson and Satchel Paige and to Frank White to George Brett, to Salvador Pérez and Alex Gordon and the next generation of Kansas City baseball stars. And you see that continuity and understand how central this game is to America.

So I want to thank this group for not only writing the current chapter, but hopefully,

* White House correction.

writing the next chapter of our national pastime, the great game of baseball.

Give it up one last time for the world champ Kansas City Royals.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:06 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Sen. Robert J. Dole; Mayor Sylvester James, Jr., of Kansas City, MO; George Brett, former third baseman, Frank White, former second baseman, Alex J. Gordon, left fielder, Michael C. Moustakas, third baseman, Eric J. Hosmer, first baseman, Salvador Pérez, catcher, Wade A. Davis, Kelvin Herrera, and Christopher R. Young, pitchers, Alcides Escobar, shortstop, Lorenzo L. Cain, centerfielder, Jarrod M. Dyson, right fielder, and Christian A. Colón, second baseman, Kansas City Royals; Walker Earnest, son of Press Secretary Earnest; and musician Willie "Fetty Wap" Maxwell II.

Remarks at an Eid al-Fitr Reception
July 21, 2016

The President. Hello, everybody. Well, *Eid Mubarak*.

Audience members. *Eid Mubarak*.

The President. Can everybody please give Aisha a big round of applause? It was such a kind introduction. I want to thank her for her eloquent letter and speaking out not just for herself, but on behalf of Muslim Americans everywhere. She was a little nervous when she came out, and she did great. So I was nervous the first time I did this—[*laughter*]—but I have to admit, I've done this a while now.

I want to thank Raahima for sharing words from the Holy Koran. I want to welcome to the White House everybody who is here.

For the past 7 years, we've held our annual iftar dinner. Some of you have joined us on those occasions. This year, for my last year as President, I wanted to do something a little bit different, and I'm very proud to host this Eid celebration at the White House. I want give some particular thanks to our White House liaison to the Muslim American community, Zaki Barzinji, for his great work on our event. And we're joined by so many proud and patriotic Muslim Americans from across the country and from all walks of life.

This Ramadan, we said goodbye to somebody who was not only a friend to many here, a great American, of—somebody who I had the great honor to know—the Greatest, the Champ, Muhammad Ali. And as proud of his Blackness as he was of his faith, the Champ taught us that the most important thing in life is to be ourselves. And so today we are especially honored to be joined by his wonderful wife Lonnie and six of his children. So please give them a big round of applause.

So we're coming together to celebrate Eid and the blessings of another holy month of Ramadan. I know we are a little late this year. [*Laughter*] The advantage is that you're not as hungry as you were a couple of weeks ago. [*Laughter*] But our celebration is just as festive; the food is just as good.

For Muslims across the United States and around the world, this is a time of spiritual renewal, a time to reaffirm your duty to serve one another, especially the least fortunate among us. And it's a time to reflect on the values that guide you in your faith: gratitude, compassion, and generosity. And it's a reminder that those values of Islam, which comes from the word *salaam,* meaning peace, are universal. They bind us all, regardless of our race or religion or creed, in a common purpose, and that is in our shared commitment to the dignity of every human being.

Today is also another reminder that Muslims have always been a part of America. In colonial times, many of the slaves brought over from Africa were Muslim. We insisted on freedom of religion, in Thomas Jefferson's words, "for the Jew and Gentile, the Christian and the Mahometan." [*Laughter*] For more than two centuries, Muslim Americans of all backgrounds—Arab and Asian, African and Latino, Black and White—have helped build America

as farmers and merchants, factory workers, architects, teachers, and community leaders.

And Muslim Americans have enriched our lives every single day. You're the doctors we trust with our health, entrepreneurs who create jobs, artists who inspire us, activists for social justice, like the LGBT Muslims who are on the frontlines in the fight for equality. You are the athletes that we cheer for, like American fencing champion Ibtihaj Muhammad. She's going to be proudly wearing her hijab when she represents America at the Rio Olympics. No pressure. [*Laughter*]

Muslim Americans help keep us safe. You're our firefighters, our police officers, like Deputy Police Chief Malik Aziz of the Dallas Police Department, who's helping that community that is still grieving heal after the tragic attack against law enforcement in that city. "There can be no actual progress unless we actually work together," Malik has said. "The police and the community must work together. There is no us versus them." So we thank Malik for his outstanding service.

And Muslim Americans serve proudly in our Armed Forces, risking their lives to defend our freedom. Now, we're especially honored to be joined by veterans here today like Sheikh Nazeem Abdul Karriem, who fought in World War II. He said he's 95, but I think he's lying. [*Laughter*] He looks younger. He says he tells people he's 59. [*Laughter*] And—but we are so proud of him and what he's done to fight for our freedom. And I'd ask all our proud servicemembers and veterans, if you can, to raise your hands so that we can thank you for your service.

By the way, I should mention that Muslim Americans aren't just heroes in real life. One of today's most popular comic book superheroes is a Pakistani American girl named Kamala Khan, also known as Ms. Marvel. And I'm a comic book fan. [*Laughter*] But it's important that our children see positive, rich portrayals of all people, including Muslims from all walks of life, not just in the national security context, in the news and TV and movies, we—the diversity and depth of the Muslim American experience needs to be portrayed.

So let's be clear: Muslim Americans are as patriotic, as integrated, as American as any other members of the American family. And whether your family has been here for generations or you're a new arrival, you're an essential part of the fabric of our country.

Now, of course, we can't deny that we're in challenging times right now. This is a difficult time for Muslim Americans. Like——

Audience member. Four more years!

The President. Well, that——

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. No, no, no. Nope, nope, nope. Michelle is going to come down and scold you. [*Laughter*] Don't say that.

Like all Americans, you worry about the threat of terrorism. But on top of that, you fear that your entire community will be blamed for the violent acts of a few who do not represent your faith.

As many of you know, earlier this year I had the chance to visit the Islamic Society of Baltimore, and I met with some outstanding Muslim Americans from across the country. And they told me about the great work they're doing in business and education and medicine and social justice. But they were very honest with me about their anxieties and their fears of being targeted because of their faith.

And I get heartbreaking letters like the one from Aisha. She told me, "There were moments in my life where I would want to just take off my hijab and leave my identity behind so I can fit in with my peers." That's a young American, full of promise, full of possibility, fearful because of her faith. And we've seen a spike in Muslim Americans, including children, being attacked, mosques being targeted, especially during the final, holiest days of Ramadan. And that shouldn't be happening in the United States of America.

Singling out Muslim Americans, moreover, feeds the lie of terrorists like ISIL that the West is somehow at war with a religion that includes over a billion adherents. That's not smart national security. In fact, it is ISIL and Al Qaida and organizations like those that are waging war on Muslim communities even dur-

ing the holy month. And discriminating against Muslim Americans is also an affront to the very values that already make our Nation great.

So, on days like this, and on every day, we need to be clear about what we stand for. Muslim Americans and all Americans have to reject hatred. Muslim Americans and all Americans have to reject discrimination. Muslim Americans and all Americans have to answer those who would peddle hate or suggest that somehow their interpretations of their faith justify violence.

All of us have those obligations, whether we are Christian or Jew or Hindu or Muslim or of no faith at all. We have to affirm that in this country, it is our obligation to abide by the law, to look out for each other, to be part of a single community, and that we can still appreciate our differences and retain those things that are essential to our identities and still strongly affirm our commitment and our faith in this country.

We've got to rededicate ourselves to make sure that no Americans feels isolated or second-class citizens. And I especially want to speak to the young people who are here, to make sure that you know that we see you, that we believe in you. And despite what you may sometime hear, you've got to know that you're a valued part of the American family and there's nothing that you cannot do.

So, during what was a difficult Ramadan, where we saw hundreds of innocent lives taken in Istanbul and Dhaka and Baghdad and Medina, as well as in Orlando and Nice——

Audience member. Syria.

The President. And Syria—I was getting to Syria, but—well, look, I mean, the brutal images and suffering that are taking place there are heartbreaking. And so that—the message has to be sent that we will stand with our friends and our allies around the world, including Muslim communities: that we will engage with those who want peace, that we will go after those who will harm innocents, that we will encourage dialogue not just between faiths, but oftentimes, within the Muslim faith itself, which has driven violence in some parts of the world.

And in the face of terrorism, we will prevail. But we will prevail by working together, not driving each other apart.

And that's ultimately what we have to do as Americans: to stand together and look out for one another. And we welcome those who believe in the basic promise of our country and that no matter who you are, what you look like, where you're from, how you worship, if you work hard, if you are responsible, if you are law abiding, then you can make it here in America.

That's the story of Aref and Aida Saad. Where are they?

Audience member. Right here.

The President. There you are way in the back. [*Laughter*] You can see their hands. In 1973, Aref and Aida decided to pack up their lives in Lebanon and come to America in search of a better life. The couple settled down in Detroit, Michigan. Aref spotted an opportunity. He started a distribution company that specialized in halal meat to serve the growing Muslim population in Detroit. Forty years later, it's a thriving company. And they're now paying it forward. One of their daughters, Fayrouz, used to work in my administration; she now works with the Detroit Mayor's Office helping to welcome today's immigrants and refugees.

And so the Saads, they set a great example for new arrivals like Heba and Rahaf Alrahawan. Heba and Rahaf, where are you?

Audience members. Right here.

The President. There you are. So, back home in Syria, these two sisters watched as the growing violence leveled their neighborhood, demolished their home, destroyed their father's car company. And in 2012, their family fled Syria and spent 4 years in Malaysia as refugees. Four months ago, they were able to come to Brooklyn to start their lives over. In their first week, they signed up for English classes. Heba works in a clothing store on the weekends, studies English during the weekdays, hopes to save enough money to enroll in college to study information technology.

So, when you look at the life that the Saads have built, you look at Muslim Americans in this room who've made incredible contributions in

every possible field, it's not hard to imagine that these two sisters are going to do the same. So, Heba and Rahaf, welcome to America. We're proud to have you here.

And that's what makes this country special. You work hard, you do the right thing, and you can not only make a difference for ourselves and our families, but we can make a difference for the life of the Nation.

So today we celebrate this wonderful holiday and honor a great faith, but we also recommit ourselves to building an America where everybody has the opportunity to achieve their dreams. And we reaffirm the values of democracy and freedom of religion and tolerance and community building and understanding and hard work that allows all of us—whatever our faiths—to prosper.

So I'm proud of all of you. I hope you enjoy this wonderful reception. Thank you. God bless you. And God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Beaverton, OR, resident Aisha Osman; Leesburg, VA, resident Raahima Sadiqqi; and White House Associate Director of Public Engagement Zaki Barzinji. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

The President's News Conference With President Enrique Peña Nieto of Mexico
July 22, 2016

President Obama. Good morning, everybody. *Buenos dias.* Please have a seat. It is always a great pleasure to welcome my good friend and partner, President Peña Nieto of Mexico, to the White House, and his delegation. Enrique and I just worked together at the North American Leaders' Summit in Ottawa last month. Today we have two of the "Three Amigos"—[*laughter*]—although, the handshake is a little easier when it's just between two people. [*Laughter*]

Let me start by saying something that is too often overlooked, but bears repeating, especially given some of the heated rhetoric that we sometimes hear. The United States values tremendously our enduring partnership with Mexico and our extraordinary ties of family and friendship with the Mexican people.

Mexico is our third largest trading partner. We sell more to Mexico than we do to China, India, and Russia combined. Every year, millions of tourists and businesspeople and friends and family cross our border legally. Every day, $1.5 billion in trade and investment crosses our border, and that's trade that supports over a million jobs right here in the United States. On a whole host of issues, from our shared security to climate change, Mexico is a critical partner and is critically important to our own well-being. We're not just strategic and economic partners, we're also neighbors, and we're friends, and we're family, including millions of Americans that are connected to Mexico by ties of culture and of language.

And that's why, as President, I've worked to deepen the partnership between our two nations. And today Enrique and I discussed ways to keep strengthening the U.S.-Mexico partnership.

First, through forums like our high-level economic dialogue, we're going to keep working to boost trade and grow our economies and create more opportunity for our people. With today's air transport agreement, we're expanding the number of airports that businesses and consumers can fly from, which will make travel and trade more affordable and more efficient. Both our countries are working hard to bring into effect the Trans-Pacific Partnership so that our workers can compete on a level playing field across the Asia-Pacific region and can open up doors to new markets.

I reiterated to President Peña Nieto that although I am disappointed in the Supreme

Court's failure to come to a decision on our immigration executive action, it is my firm belief that it will be in the interests of the United States, especially our economic interest, to pursue comprehensive immigration reform.

Second, we are deepening our robust partnership on energy and environmental issues. Both of our nations are committed to ensuring that the historic Paris Agreement is fully implemented, and we're going to keep on working towards the goal that we announced last month in Ottawa, generating half the electricity in North America through clean power by 2025.

With that goal in mind, we are pursuing an agreement this year on sharing civilian nuclear technology. This fall, our new U.S.-Mexico Energy Business Council will meet for the very first time to strengthen the ties between our energy industries. And, Mr. President, I want to thank you for your vision and your leadership in reforming Mexico's energy industry. I'm also pleased that our nations will continue working to protect our shared ecosystems and environmental heritage.

Third, we'll continue to protect the health and safety of our people, especially from the opioid epidemic that is taking so many lives and devastating so many communities. Both of our nations, we agreed, share a responsibility to combat this crisis. Here in the United States, we're working to improve treatment and prevention and reduce the availability of illicit drugs. And I applaud President Peña Nieto's commitment to combating organized crime and for developing a new plan to curb poppy cultivation and heroin production. We continue to deploy 21st-century technologies to secure our shared border. And as Mexico makes important reforms to its judicial system, we are working together to strengthen law enforcement and to strengthen observance of human rights and the rule of law.

Fourth, we're stepping up our efforts to tackle regional and global challenges, from confronting cyber threats to fighting diseases like Zika and Dengue. We'll keep partnering with Central American countries to address the instability and poverty that's prompted so many people to embark on the dangerous journey north. And even as we address migration challenges in our own hemisphere, I am very grateful that Mexico is taking an important step on refugee issues and will be cohosting our refugee summit at the United Nations this September.

And finally, we continue to strengthen the strong ties between our people. We want more American students studying in Mexico. We want more Mexican students studying in the United States. So today we agreed to extend and update our educational cooperation. Through efforts like our 100,000 Strong in the Americas initiative, we're expanding opportunities for educational exchanges and scientific partnerships and research collaborations. And we're working to help girls learn around the world, including Mexico's commitment to support teachers and schools throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

In closing, since this is most likely to be our final White House meeting, I'm reminded of what President Peña Nieto said when he first came here almost 4 years ago. Enrique, you said that our nations had a great opportunity "to have a closer link of brotherhood, of sisterhood, of collaboration, and of course, of great accomplishments." I am proud of what we've achieved together and proud to stand with you and the Mexican people as our brothers and sisters in progress. And I'm confident that our nations will continue to grow even stronger and more prosperous together in the future.

Muchas gracias. Thank you very much.

President Peña Nieto. Good afternoon, everyone. First of all, I would like to thank President Barack Obama for this very kind invitation to be holding this official visit here at the White House, perhaps the last one that will be taking place here at the White House during your administration, President Obama.

And I would also like to particularly here say how important this friendship is, the friendship we have always had from President Obama. And he has been, and his administration, they have been very good neighbors. He has been a very good neighbor and a President committed with the less favored of his country and with

stability also and harmony in our hemisphere and with a solution of global challenges, as for instance climate change, international migration, and the reduction of nuclear weapons.

I would also like to recognize in his administration the decisive support of favoring migrants, including the over 35 million people of Mexican origin who live in the United States, who are part of the generation of wealth and employment in this country.

I would also like to take advantage of expressing our condolences of the Mexican people, my personal condolences, for the lamentable events in Texas and Louisiana.

I fully recognize and acknowledge in President Obama a leader committed in our bilateral relationship, which I should say is today going through one of its best moments and stages in the relationship of the history between our two countries.

In this visit, we have agreed to work on an agenda since 2013, a multithematic agenda favoring regional competitiveness. We coincided during our meeting this morning on the importance of institutionalizing accomplishments so that they will be lasting throughout time, with a bilateral forum on higher education. This year, over 64,000 Mexican students will be carrying out academic activities here in the United States.

And on the other hand, the high-level economic dialogue, with the participation of officials of both administrations of the highest ranking level, has undoubtedly become a platform for integration, competitiveness, and growth. And we have also agreed, ladies and gentlemen, in this meeting to give it a permanent character so that the benefits that derive from this dialogue will be extended throughout time.

Now we have joint cargo inspection programs to reduce costs of up to 50 percent—that is half the cost—and waiting times that have also been reduced by 60 percent. We've also implemented this project, this program at the Laredo, Texas, airport, at the Mesa Otay Baja border crossing, and soon this will also be operating in Ciudad Juarez. With projects such as this, we're building a safer, more modern and agile border, a border that undoubtedly generates prosperity for both countries.

Under this framework of competitiveness, we are now celebrating going into effect of the bilateral agreement favoring connectivity between both countries so that as of the moment this agreement goes into effect, we are going to have more flights, more flights that will be better connecting Mexico and the United States.

And today we've also formalized the Energy Business Council to support Mexico's transition towards an open and competitive market. And we said that the issues related to security and migration should be analyzed from an internal, comprehensive perspective under the principle of shared responsibility.

We coincide in the fact that the consumption and fighting consumption in trafficking in heroin is a priority and that we should find solutions to this challenge. We both raised for this. We have created a high-level task force on drugs focused on heroin and fentanyl.

And we've also decided to increase our cooperation with the governments of Central America, especially Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras, so that we can look into migration issues, especially the protection of children that are traveling unaccompanied.

Finally, let me refer to the electoral process that's taking place here in the United States. And let me say that the closeness between the United States and Mexico is more than just a relationship between two governments. It is a solid, a sound, unbreakable relationship among millions of peoples who live in both nations.

And for Mexicans, for Americans, we are all united by 3,000 kilometers of border with neighboring States—10 neighboring States—and a population of over 50 million inhabitants. And their well-being depends on the well-being of their neighbors. And for the Mexican people, for the Mexican Government, the very good relationship with the United States of America is, of course, essential.

And from now on and right here, let me express my absolute will of collaboration to whomever is elected in November as the leader of this great Nation. The next Madam or President of the United States will find in Mex-

ico and its Government a constructive attitude with proposals and good faith to strengthen the relationship between our two nations.

I am certain, ladies and gentlemen, that the political process in the following months will be characterized by the intensity of the debate and the contrast of ideas and the vitality of the citizens' participation, according to the great democratic tradition that characterizes the United States. The Mexican Government will be observing with great interest the electoral process of this country, but it will not give its opinion. It will not get involved in said process. This is an issue that fully, exclusively corresponds to the people of the United States.

And Mrs. Hillary Clinton and Mr. Donald Trump, I would like to express to both of them my greatest respect, my deepest respect. And from right now, I propose going into a frank, open dialogue with whomever is elected. On the relationship between our two nations, I am sure that with the Government of the United States, it will be possible to take a step ahead so that we can face common challenges and take advantage of our enormous opportunities that we share, of course, and find solutions, solutions for possible differences.

Undoubtedly, for Mexico, it is very important for the United States to do well and for the United States to have a strong economy. And for the United States, it's also very convenient for the Mexican economy to also do well. And your next Madam President or President will find in Mexico a strategic partner to face economic security issues that we share and all the challenges that we share.

I would like to reiterate, President Barack Obama, my appreciation for your hospitality, for this fraternal meeting and for everything, because this is tracing the route and the promise that we can continue working together as sister nations and neighbors. And I reiterate my broadest recognition, President Obama, for being invariably a great friend of Mexico.

Thank you very much.

President Obama. We've got time for a few questions, starting with Kevin Corke [Fox News].

Republican National Convention/Crime Rates/Immigration/The President's Approval Rating

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

President Obama. Yes.

Q. I'm wondering if you had a chance to take in the RNC last night, get your reaction to the comments made by the Republican Presidential nominee. And specifically, how do you counterbalance—as we look ahead to Philadelphia, how do you counterbalance what was clearly an appealing message to many working class Americans?

And I wanted to drill down also on his comments about the wall. He said once again there's a need for a wall. And I ask that question because you and I know that the United States spends tens of millions of dollars on a barrier between our two countries already, so I'm wondering, where does Mr. Trump have it wrong as far as a need for a wall?

And you may also know, sir, that your approval ratings are historically high—congrats on that. And yet your right track, wrong track—about two-thirds of Americans still say we're on a wrong track. Can you sort of square that disconnect? Is it unfair to say that's an indictment of your Presidency? [*Laughter*]

And, Mr. President, thank you for coming. Two simple questions. One—and you kind of touched on this—Donald Trump very well could be the President in January. How do you work with a person, how do you partner with a person, that you've previously compared to Hitler and Mussolini? And specifically, on antinarcotic interdiction and anti–human trafficking interdiction on the border, are you satisfied with the job that you've done as President? And what should Mexico be doing more of to help stem the tide?

Thank you, gentlemen.

President Obama. Okay. Well, first of all, I want to congratulate the city of Cleveland, Secret Service, local law enforcement that managed a big influx of people and the occasional protester and just a lot of activity, and made sure that everybody was looked after, everybody was safe. I think they did a great job hosting.

Second, the Republicans had an opportunity this week to share their vision with the country and emphasize those issues that they thought were important. And I'm going to let the American people judge how persuasive their arguments were. Next week, the Democrats will have an opportunity to present their vision of both the progress we've made and how we make sure that everybody gets opportunity and security in the future.

I noticed a little bit of editorializing there, Kevin, when you said, how do I counter a message that was "clearly appealing to working class Americans." I don't know if you've talked to all of them. [*Laughter*]

Q. Only in Ohio. [*Laughter*]

President Obama. Well, it's the—so it's not really clear how appealing it was. We'll find out. That's what elections are for.

I did not watch the convention. I don't think that's a surprise. I've got a lot of stuff to do—[*laughter*]—and they are pretty long events. But I did read some of what was said. And the one thing that I think is important to recognize is this idea that America is somehow on the verge of collapse, this vision of violence and chaos everywhere, doesn't really jibe with the experience of most people. I mean, I hope people, the next morning, walked outside and birds were chirping and the sun was out, and this afternoon people will be watching their kids play in sports teams and go to the swimming pool, and folks are going to work and getting ready for the weekend. And in particular, I think it is important just to be absolutely clear here that some of the fears that were expressed throughout the week just don't jibe with the facts.

So let's take two specific examples. When it comes to crime, the violent crime rate in America has been lower during my Presidency than any time in the last three, four decades. And although it is true that we've seen an uptick in murders and violent crime in some cities this year, the fact of the matter is, is that the murder rate today, the violence rate today is far lower than it was when Ronald Reagan was President and lower than when I took office.

We've just gone through a tragic period where we saw both a tragedy in Minnesota and Baton Rouge and then the insanity and the viciousness of people targeting police officers. And we are all heartbroken by that, and we're all troubled by how we can rebuild trust, support law enforcement, and make sure that communities feel that they are being fairly policed. But the fact is that the rate of intentional killings of police officers is also significantly lower than it was when Ronald Reagan was President. Now, those are facts. That's the data.

When it comes to immigration, I think Americans expect that our immigration process is orderly and it is legal. And we have put unprecedented resources at our border. Well, it turns out that the rate of illegal migration into the United States today is lower by two-thirds than it was when Ronald Reagan was President. We have far fewer undocumented workers crossing the border today than we did in the eighties or the nineties or when George Bush was President. That's a fact.

So the one thing that I think is important is—obviously, there are going to be different visions about where we should go as a country: How we can provide jobs, how we can make sure that our kids are able to get the education they need to succeed in the 21st century, how do we deal with our budget, how do we make sure our tax system is fair, how do we deal with very real issues around growing inequality or wages that have not gone up as fast as we want and the real pressures that a lot of families feel. But we're not going to make good decisions based on fears that don't have a basis in fact.

And that, I think, is something that I hope all Americans pay attention to. America is much less violent than it was 20, 30 years ago. And immigration is much less a problem than it was not just 20, 30 years ago, but when I came in as President. That doesn't mean we have solved those problems, but those are facts.

I think that covers just about everything—oh, you had some question about my approval ratings being high and right track, wrong track being——

Q. Right track——

President Obama. I think if you look at almost every year, under every President over the last, I don't know, 20, 30 years, you're going to be hard pressed to find a year in which the majority of Americans thought we were on the right track. Maybe because all the good things that are happening in America don't get reported on a lot. So I don't think that's actually unusual. But I appreciate you bringing up the fact that my poll numbers are doing okay. [*Laughter*]

President Peña Nieto. Thank you very much, President Obama.

Let me reiterate what I said a few minutes ago. The relationship between the United States and Mexico goes over and beyond the relationship between two governments. This is a relationship that has been built as of two peoples who have a common life—or millions of people who have their everyday lives in both nations; a relationship that undoubtedly involves millions of inhabitants of both countries.

I would also like to say, as I've said before, that for the Mexican administration, the democratic process, that you live here in the American Union, and for this process we will always be absolutely respectful. We will not get involved. We will not give our opinion. We will not set any type of position. Because at the end of the day, this corresponds to the people of the United States, and it is the American people who have to decide who the next male or female President will be.

But what we can say right now is that whomever is elected here as President, the Mexican Government will be working in a very constructive manner, with good faith. I am certain that the relationship between both countries goes beyond the mere economic environment.

Here, President Obama has highlighted many of the such relevant figures that show the vitality of the economic relationship, the trade and commerce relationship between our two nations, the millions of jobs that are generated in the United States and in Mexico as exactly the economic relationship.

But there's another very important aspect that I should highlight: the good cooperation that we have in terms of security, not only for the Mexican Government to combat organized crime in a more efficient manner, but also for the U.S. Government to efficiently fight criminal groups that practically are not respecting any type of border and that are cooperating in both nations. The cooperation in terms of security between Mexico and the United States is also ever present in the fight against terrorism. We are working so that we can turn North America into a terrorism-free nation and have a part of the world, of course.

And this is something we share every day in this—every day cooperation. We share information. We do activities together. And we are always trying to keep North America as a region free of the presence of terrorism.

The relationship between Mexico and the United States is very broad and at different fronts. That is why the attitude and the position of my administration in terms of committing ourselves to continue working with whomever is elected as President of the United States, it is the decision that—we are going to respect the decision of the American people.

And let me also say that never before have I said anything, have I given any adjective to any of the candidates in the democratic competition here in the United States. Any issue, anything that I have said has been taken out of context. And especially, if we gather everything that has been said on this process, if you see everything that I have said, invariably I have expressed absolute respect for this process, because, I reiterate, this is an issue that's in the decision of the American people, exclusively of the people of the United States.

Trade

Q. Yes. Good afternoon, Mr. Presidents. Both governments have expressed that they are in favor of the free market and globalization. We've heard some voices that oppose themselves to this paradigm. Candidate Trump has pointed out that he is inclined towards protectionism. My question is, do the legal mechanisms of NAFTA provide it with strength so that it is not put aside by decree?

And, President Obama, I'd like to ask you what pending issues you have in your administration

that you would have liked to complete? Thank you.

President Peña Nieto. I think the free market model of commercial trade openness, this model has undoubtedly shown enormous benefits for nations, for those of us that follow this model, of course. And let me just say that as of the agreement signed with the United States and Canada—I'm talking about NAFTA, of course—the trade level grew over 500 percent—547 percent to be exact—in this last 20 years of NAFTA. And this undoubtedly is reflected in more productive investments, in the creation of jobs as well. And it has promoted different projects for the development of infrastructure to make our countries even more competitive.

I also think that what is happening is that whenever we've had a slowdown process in the world economy, we start questioning the model, no doubt. However—and this is something I'm fully convinced of—no doubt that this model Mexico has followed and promoted and fostered, well, it has had a particularly important strategic partnership with the U.S. and Canada.

This is a model that still promises a lot of things, so much for the benefits of our citizens, because it allows us to consolidate the North American region as a more competitive region, with a lot more investment, and which we are really taking advantage of opportunities to build labor possibilities for our peoples. This is really something we have to highlight and underline.

And bear in mind, because it represents so much and this agreement is projecting into the future, of course—free trade, of course. Right now we can say that this is something that we have had now for 20 years. And I think there are also conditions to modernize, to update, and to find more advantages so that it will potentiate shared common possibilities that we, the three partners, the three strategic partners, have. I am talking about Mexico, the United States, and Canada.

I believe that this agreement, which is also strengthened through TPP, which is now about to be approved in the different countries, undoubtedly, they potentialize, they boost, and they create a highly promising platform for economic development and for the benefits this will constitute for our societies.

I think the mechanism of solidarity and the purpose—I think the position of the United States is that after 20 years of having NAFTA, we now have eventually the conditions to modernize it, to update NAFTA, and potentialize this agreement even more.

President Obama. I agree with Enrique that one of the values of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, TPP, is that we've learned from our experience in NAFTA what's worked, what hasn't, where we can strengthen it. And a number of the provisions inside of the Trans-Pacific Partnership address some previous criticisms of NAFTA and will make what is already an extraordinarily strong economic relationship between our two countries even stronger and will make sure that the process of global integration is serving not just large companies, but is helping small companies and small businesses and workers.

So what I've said consistently is that globalization is a fact—because of technology, because of an integrated global supply chain, because of changes in transportation. And we're not going to be able to build a wall around that. What we can do is to shape how that process of global integration proceeds so that it's increasing opportunity for ordinary people; so that it's creating better jobs; so that we are strengthening protections for workers; so that we are addressing some of the environmental challenges that come with rapid growth.

And for us to look forward and find ways in which we shape this new direction of the global economy in a way that benefits everybody, rather than to look backwards and think that we can undo what has taken place, I think is our best strategy.

And for all the talk about starting trade wars or increasing protectionist barriers between countries, when you actually examine how our economies work—auto plants in the United States, for example, would have a very hard time producing the number of automobiles they produce—and they've been having record

years over the last several years—if they're also not getting some supplies from companies in Mexico. And companies in Mexico are not going to do well if they don't have some connection to not just markets, but also suppliers and technology from the United States.

So we have to focus on, how do we ensure the economy works for everybody and not just a few? There are dangers that globalization increased inequality. There are dangers that because capital is mobile and workers are not, if we are not providing them sufficient protection that they can be left behind in this process. And that's what we have to focus on. And the Trans-Pacific Partnership is consistent with that. Okay?

Juliet Eilperin [Washington Post].

Turkey

Q. President Obama, given the fact that the Government of Turkey is asking for the extradition of Turkish cleric Fethullah Gülen, how are you weighing that decision? How do you view allegations that he helped foment the recent coup and that Turkish intelligence officials have said that they believe U.S. intelligence services had direct knowledge of the coup's planning?

Also, with the detention of more than 10,000 Turks, the firing of thousands more, and a ban on overseas travel by academics there, at what point do you need to speak out more forcefully about these tactics?

And, *Señor Presidente,* I did my undergraduate thesis on the PRI and the legacy of the revolution and how that shaped your nation's politics.

[*At this point, the reporter spoke in Spanish, and no translation was provided. She then continued in English as follows.*]

My question for you is that you've mentioned your efforts to address heroin and the trafficking and the transfer to the United States. Could you talk a bit more about the challenges that you face in disrupting this illegal trade, particularly given the fact that often, it's transported in small amounts, making the kind of large busts that Mexico and the U.S. have collaborated on in terms of other illicit drugs more difficult?

And in addition, you, like President Obama, have made climate change a top priority. Can you talk about the biggest obstacles you face there in achieving your climate goals, and how climate impacts are affecting your country and the future relationship between the U.S. and Mexico in terms of migration and other factors? *Gracias.*

President Obama. So, Juliet, first of all, I had a chance to talk to President Erdogan this week and reiterated what we said from the earliest reports that a coup was being attempted in Turkey, and that is that we strongly reject any attempt to overthrow democracy in Turkey, that we support the democratically elected government there.

And I think one of the signs of great strength in the Turkish people was the fact that even strong opponents of President Erdogan—when reports of the coup were taking place and when it was still uncertain who exactly was behind it—even opponents of President Erdogan pushed back hard against the idea that the military should overthrow a democratically elected government.

Any reports that we had any previous knowledge of a coup attempt, that there was any U.S. involvement in it, that we were anything other than entirely supportive of Turkish democracy are completely false, unequivocally false. And I said that to President Erdogan. And I also said to him that he needed—he needs to make sure that not just he, but everybody in his Government understand that those reports are completely false. Because when rumors like that start swirling around, that puts our people at risk on the ground in Turkey, and it threatens what is a critical alliance and partnership between the United States and Turkey.

So I want to be as clear and unequivocal as I can be: We deplore the attempted coup. We said so earlier than just about anybody and have been consistent throughout that the Turkish people deserve a government that was democratically elected.

Now, what is true is, is that President Erdogan and Turkey have a strong belief that Mr. Gülen, here in—who is in Pennsylvania, a legal resident of the United States, is somehow behind some of these efforts. And what I said to President Erdogan is the same thing that I would say to you and anybody else who asks, which is, we have a process here in the United States for dealing with extradition requests made by foreign governments. And it's governed by treaties, and it's governed by laws. And it is not a decision that I make, but rather a decision that our Justice Department and investigators and courts make, alongside my administration, in a very well structured and well established process.

So the—I told President Erdogan that they should present us with evidence that they think indicates the involvement of Mr. Gülen or anybody else who is here in the United States and it would be processed the way that it is always processed, and that we would certainly take any allegations like this seriously. But America is governed by rules of law, and those are not ones that the President of the United States or anybody else can just set aside for the sake of expediency. Even when we are deeply supportive of Turkish democracy, and even when we care deeply about any attempts to overthrow their Government or any other illegal actions, we've got to go through a legal process.

Finally, with respect to what's happening in the aftermath of the coup attempt, in my conversations with President Erdogan, I think in statements by John Kerry and others, what we have indicated is our strong belief and hope that as the dust settles, there is not a overreaction that could in some fashion lead to a curtailment of civil liberties or a weakening of the ability of legitimate opposition or journalists, through legal processes, to voice their concerns and to petition their Government; and that the United States, as a friend and partner of Turkey's, and me personally, as somebody who has worked with President Erdogan for a long time now, would encourage that the manner in which this coup is investigated and people are held accountable and justice is done is consistent with rule of law and the basic freedoms that I think the Turkish people have fought for and defended.

And obviously, we can't discount how scary and shaken not just the Turkish Government is, but Turkish society is. Imagine if you had some runt group of military officials here in the United States who started flying off with F–16s or other artillery and were taking shots at Government buildings and people were killed and injured. People would be scared and rightfully so. But one of the challenges of a democratic government is making sure that even in the midst of emergencies and passions, we make sure that rule of law and the basic precepts of justice and liberty prevail. And my hope is, is that is what will emerge.

In the meantime, we will continue to work with Turkey, even as they try to stabilize the situation. The—our base at Incirlik, from which we are going after ISIL hard, is up and running again, and we continue to work with them to make sure that we don't lose momentum that we've built in terms of weakening ISIL's position in Syria and to try to strengthen the prospects for some resolution of that terrible conflict.

President Peña Nieto. Thank you very much for your question because it allows us to show and to talk about a subject matter we have agreed and something that I mentioned in my first participation in this meeting—which is exactly that, related to the creation—as a matter of fact, since we met in Canada a few days ago, creating a high-level group to define mechanisms to combat the production of poppy—opium poppy cultivation, and also opium gum and heroin coming into the United States, which is the situation clearly today. What is reality all about? We see that there's a growing production in some parts of the geography of Mexico where there are conditions for the production of this crop. And there's also a growing introduction of heroin here in the United States.

Well, this is the information we have right now. That's why we have to get together to build, we have to continue working together to find a solution to eradicate crops and to have alternative crops, a conversion of crops, and

create mechanisms that would allow us to face up to this scourge, which has taken the life of hundreds of people, especially here in the United States.

What we have agreed on is to work together and to define the route we're going to be following. I insist to avoid this poppy crops from extending to other parts of the Mexican geography whenever that is possible and thus be able to reduce, to diminish, to reduce and avoid the growing entrance of heroin in the United States.

But I think this topic shows something else. It shows us the need of working together. It also shows the need both countries have to face up to problems that are common problems. And crops of poppy in Mexico, which is the base for heroin production, undoubtedly is taking place in places where there's a violence as of the production of these crops and criminal groups as well, who have become stronger through the introduction of illegal weapons, guns in our country, guns, firearms coming from the United States into Mexico. Unfortunately, well, this is encouraging—increasingly encouraging—the opium poppy cultivation in Mexico.

I repeat, this is a common problem because it generates a problem of violence in our country and strengthening criminal groups in our country as well and the introduction of heroin here in the United States that has taken the lives of thousands of people in this country.

But what you have said is one of the many subject matters that are on the shared agenda between our two countries, I mean, the need of having and attending to this in a joint fashion. These issues show a need to work in a very close manner, in a constructive manner, in a very positive way to look into this jointly—us, two governments—to look into problems that are affecting both societies.

And this is exactly what we've decided to do. I want to thank President Barack Obama for his political will so that we can create this high-level working group, this task force to find the best solutions for this phenomenon.

Cecilia—[*inaudible*]—of the Chronicle newspaper.

Mexico-U.S. Relations

Q. Good afternoon, Presidents. You spoke about the need to institutionalize the agreements reached thus far between both nations. Besides the free trade agreement, which is this agenda of subjects taking into account the change in the administration in the United States? I'd like to ask you whether you have discussed the extradition of Chapo Guzmán as well.

President Peña Nieto. When we speak about institutionalizing mechanisms between both countries, it is for them to be durable throughout time. There are three particularly important mechanisms that are undoubtedly—are now allowing us to have a very positive, constructive relationship in both nations. First, the high-level economic dialogue—the HLED—that involves the highest-ranking officials of both our administrations that are working in favor of creating a route, a path for infrastructure, construction of borders, an infrastructure which is a lot more modern infrastructure that will allow to have more agile trade and commerce between our two nations.

And in terms of security, something that I have already said as many of the other subject matters under responsibility, security cooperation allows us to fight together, jointly, criminal organizations operating in both countries, and maintaining a safe border. All comes from this high-level dialogue that we have.

And surely, the academic exchanges, academic exchanges seek to have more students from Mexico to be able to come to the United States to get their training, their education here, and North American students to be able to go to Mexico. And this has been a growing impetus. The number of students, it's 64,000 right now—3 years ago, it was 15,000—Mexican students who are coming here to study in the United States. It is precisely this decision; we've decided to continue on this path and to continue promoting it.

And the third thing here is the mechanism to implement innovation, technology, and infrastructure in North America. This is a mechanism that's allowing us to really identify areas

of opportunity; to enhance value chains, productive chains, and also supply chains that are there for the production in the United States as well as in Mexico. In fact, we've already defined a clusters mapping process so that we can really promote the economic activity in both nations and how can we strengthen this relationship, of course. And this is another mechanism generated as of the commitment and the will of President Obama's administration.

So the relationship between our two countries is not a monothematic relationship, just focusing on security. But we wanted to really try to launch efforts in both governments to promote competitiveness and productivity of the United States, of Mexico, of North America as a whole, and to really promote and foster this region so that it can become the most attractive region for investments, economic growth and productivity and development. And for that, we have to be working in common fronts, especially in joint projects that are jointly defined that will also allow us to really comply with this purpose and objective.

President Obama. Let me give a summary of what we mean when we say the need to institutionalize the relationship. I think it's very important to remember that so much of the work that gets done between countries is not done at the level of Presidents, but is done within various agencies, whether it's law enforcement or economic ministries. And when they establish relationships and systems of communications and shared projects and shared visions, those structures continue even after any particular President is gone and build trust and understanding between countries that are critically important.

And this gives me a good opportunity, I think, to emphasize that throughout my Presidency, both with President Peña Nieto and with his predecessor, we have had consistent, strong communications, collaboration. Where there have been differences or tensions, we have consistently tried to work through them in a constructive, positive way.

And to take an example of something that obviously always gets a lot of attention—the issue of the border—a lot of the undocumented workers or migration flows that we've seen over the last several years aren't coming from Mexico, but are coming from Central America. And if it were not for the hard work of Mexico in trying to secure its border to the south and to cooperate with us, we would have a much more significant problem.

And that's not always easy. That requires resources and policy decisions made by the Mexican Government. But the cooperation on that front has been absolutely critical in making sure that we deal with these issues in a serious way and in a humane way. And we continue to make progress on that front.

The same is true when it comes to drug trafficking. This is a problem in both of our countries. And as a consequence of the work that we've done together, we have seen progress in some areas, both in the flow of drugs north, but also in the flow of guns and illicit financing south. But we're not going to be able to solve this problem by ourselves. And Mexico is going to need the United States to cooperate in order to rid itself of the violence and corruption that results from the drug trade.

And so the more we can build these kinds of habits of cooperation and ingrain them in our various agencies, the better off we're going to be. And I want everybody to be very clear: Mexico has been a consistent, strong partner with us on these issues. And if they had not been, we would have had much bigger problems on our borders. And the benefit of a cooperative Mexico—and by the way, a Mexico that has a healthy economy, a Mexico that can help us build stability and security in Central America—that's going to do a lot more to solve any migration crisis or drug trafficking problem than a wall. And it will be much more reflective of the kind of relationship that we should have with our neighbors. Okay?

Mr. President, thank you.

President Peña Nieto. Thank you. Thank you so much.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 12:02 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Justin P.J.

Trudeau of Canada; Saylorsburg, PA, resident Fethullah Gülen; and former President Felipe de Jesús Calderón Hinojosa of Mexico. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. President Peña Nieto referred to former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, in her capacity as a Democratic Presidential candidate; and Republican Presidential nominee Donald J. Trump. Reporters referred to Sinaloa drug cartel leader Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán Loera; and Mexico's Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). President Peña Nieto and some reporters spoke in Spanish, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks at a Briefing on Implementation of the Recommendations of the President's Task Force on 21st-Century Policing
July 22, 2016

Hello, everybody. Please have a seat. Have a seat.

Well, I just wanted to come by to say thank you for being here and the extraordinary work that you do each and every day. I was a little bit delayed. Some of you are aware, there were shootings in Germany. And we don't yet know exactly what's happening there, but obviously, our hearts go out to those who may have been injured. It's still an active situation. And Germany is one of our closest allies, so we are going to pledge all the support that they may need in dealing with these circumstances.

It's a good reminder of something that I've said over the last couple of weeks, which is, our way of life, our freedoms, our ability to go about our business every day, raising our kids and seeing them grow up and graduate from high school and now about to leave their dad—[*laughter*]—I'm sorry, I'm getting a little too personal, getting a little too personal there—[*laughter*]—that depends on law enforcement. It depends on the men and women in uniform every single day who are under some of the most adverse circumstances imaginable at times, making sure to keep us safe.

And obviously, we have gone through a really tough time these last couple of weeks on a whole bunch of fronts. And most recently, I had the tough job of talking to the widows of those police officers who had been killed in Baton Rouge. And I know that for men and women in uniform, each loss like that is like a loss in your own family.

But I wanted to come by to make sure that all of you knew how grateful the American people are for your service, how appreciative we are of your sacrifice. As a general proposition, you guys are not looking for the spotlight; you just want to do your jobs and keep your community safe. And you also want to come home to your own families at the end of a tough day. And for you to put yourself out there like that is one of the greatest gifts that you could give your fellow citizens.

So our job is to support you in every way that we can. It is my view—and let's be honest, sometimes, this is a controversial view—that one of the best ways to provide support to our police officers is to make sure that we are addressing potential underlying tensions between officers and the communities where they're serving, that pretending sometimes that those tensions aren't there is not going to make things better. But when we're able to bring people together and strengthen those bonds, then that's going to make the lives of police officers on a day-to-day basis just a little bit easier, and it's going to make our streets safer, and it's going to create the kind of atmosphere whereby we continue to bring crime rates down to near-historic levels.

And I made this point at a press conference yesterday—because we're in political season and there's a lot of discussion—the fact of the matter is, is that as disturbing as some of the upticks in crime that we've seen in some of our cities around the country, including my hometown of Chicago, violent crime is substantially

lower today than it was 10 years ago, 20 years ago, or 30 years ago.

Over the last 4 or 5 years, we've seen violent crime rates that we haven't seen since the 1960s. And that's not an accident. That's in part because police departments around the country have gotten really smart about preventing crime and are working with communities in all kinds of smart ways. And we can build on that progress, but it's going to require us to do exactly what you are doing today, and that is trying to figure out how we can work together to ensure that our police departments and our communities are aligned in what we all want, which is families that are safe, people abiding by the law, making sure that our kids are growing up in an environment where they can go to school and get an education and get a job and raise families of their own without fearing that somehow they're going to be struck down by a bullet or harassed and peddled drugs to by somebody who is intent on breaking the law.

So this is the fourth in a series of gatherings with law enforcement that we've organized just since June. It builds on the work that we did in our Task Force for 21st-Century Policing. My hope is that it's been useful in giving you some tools and best practices to give you a sense of how departments on the cutting edge are using data to train officers and engage with the community.

We also are, hopefully, hearing from you about what you've learned in your experience works and doesn't work and where the Federal Government can partner with your departments and State and local law enforcement officers across the country to do even better.

Because the fact is, there's exceptional policing being done every single day. We've seen departments organize community forums and panels and cookouts to bring officers together with civil rights leaders and activists and young people. Many of you, I'm sure, saw the viral videos of police playing pickup basketball with kids or dancing the Nae Nae, which wasn't, you know—[*laughter*]—that was a brave officer who did that. [*Laughter*] There are a lot more examples, though, that don't find their way onto Twitter feeds.

So I want not only to encourage all of you to implement the Task Force recommendations in ways that are tailored to your community and your needs, but I also want you to share with us things that you think work that can make a difference because our job really is as a convener. The Federal Government is not responsible for day-to-day policing of our communities, but we do have the ability to project best practices and let people share what they've seen that works.

And we do have some pretty good ideas about how to facilitate more discussions in your own communities. We are working closely with a lot of departments about how to collect data and do that better and what we've learned with respect to training that can make police work safer and more effective.

And part of the reason I wanted to stop by here is invariably what happens is, the media's attention shifts. There's a tragedy and a spate of police officers down or a shooting involving police, and it captures the media's attention. And then, suddenly, 2 months from now, there's a different story, except in one of your departments, somebody is still getting shot; it just doesn't warrant attention anymore, apparently, because it's not part of the narrative.

And what I promised both those who were angry about Minnesota and Baton Rouge, but I also promised the widows and families and children of folks in Dallas and Baton Rouge was that this is something we need to care about all the time. This is something we are going to sustain. This is not a one-off. We're going to just keep on at this. And progress is not always going to be as quick as we'd like. And there are going to be misunderstandings sometimes, and there are going to be temptations for politics to fan the flames of division instead of trying to bring people together.

But look, I'm only going to be President for 6 more months, but I'm a citizen who's going to depend on law enforcement for the rest of my life. And I've got two daughters, and hopefully, way in the future, some grandchildren who are going to depend on law enforcement. [*Laugh-*

ter] And I—and so I've got a big stake in this. And I'm going to make sure that I can do everything I can to move this in a positive direction so that, out of some heartbreak and tragedy, we can look back 5 years from now, 10 years from now, 15 years from now, and say, you know what, we keep—we kept getting better, and police officers are honored, their communities are supporting them, they are safer, and those communities truly recognize that they are being served and protected by the men and women in blue.

So thank you very much, everybody. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:51 p.m. in the South Court Auditorium of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Tonja Garafola, wife of East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Deputy Brad Garafola, who was killed in the shooting in Baton Rouge, LA, on July 17; and Dechia Gerald and Trenisha Jackson, respective wives of Baton Rouge Police Department officers Matthew Gerald and Montrell Jackson, who were also killed in the July 17 shooting.

Statement on Signing the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016
July 22, 2016

Today I signed S.524, the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016 into law. This legislation includes some modest steps to address the opioid epidemic. Given the scope of this crisis, some action is better than none.

However, I am deeply disappointed that Republicans failed to provide any real resources for those seeking addiction treatment to get the care that they need. In fact, they blocked efforts by Democrats to include $920 million in treatment funding.

Every day, 78 Americans die from opioid overdoses. I have heard from too many families across the country whose lives have been shattered by this epidemic, including a mom from Ohio who recently wrote: "There are not near enough facilities in this area to handle the amount of care that is needed. . . . We need help."

My administration has been doing everything we can to increase access to treatment, and I'm going to continue fighting to secure the funding families desperately need. In recent days, the law enforcement community, advocates, physicians, and elected officials from both sides of the aisle have also joined in this call. Now, it's up to Republicans to finish the job and provide adequate funding to deal with this public health crisis. That's what the American people deserve.

NOTE: S. 524, approved July 22, was assigned Public Law No. 114–198.

Statement on Signing the United States Semiquincentennial Commission Act of 2016
July 22, 2016

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 4875, the "United States Semiquincentennial Commission Act of 2016," which will create a United States Semiquincentennial Commission (Commission) with the responsibility to provide for the observance and commemoration, in 2026, of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States. It is altogether fitting and proper that this historic milestone be commemorated. The Act provides that the Commission will include officials who are members of the House and Senate appointed by congressional leaders, private citizens appointed by congressional leaders, and nonvoting ex officio members from the executive branch. I wholeheartedly welcome the participation of Members of Congress and private citizens in the activities of the Commission. In

accord with President Reagan's Signing Statement for similar commemorative legislation in 1983, I understand, and my Administration has so advised the Congress, that because the Commission includes Members of Congress and congressional appointees, the Commission may provide advice and recommendations, and may participate in ceremonial activities, but may not participate in matters involving the execution of the laws, in light of the separation of powers and the Appointments and Ineligibility Clauses of the Constitution.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
July 22, 2016.

NOTE: H.R. 4875, approved July 22, was assigned Public Law No. 114–196.

Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval the Presidential Allowance Modernization Act of 2016
July 22, 2016

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 1777, the "Presidential Allowance Modernization Act of 2016," which would amend the Former Presidents Act of 1958.

I agree with H.R. 1777's goal of reforming the pensions and allowances provided to former Presidents so as to reduce unnecessary costs to taxpayers. But if implemented as drafted, the bill would have unintended consequences. It would impose onerous and unreasonable burdens on the offices of former Presidents, including by requiring the General Services Administration to immediately terminate salaries and benefits of office employees and to remove furnishings and equipment from offices. It would withdraw the General Services Administration's ability to administer leases and negatively impact operations, with unanticipated implications for the protection and security of former Presidents.

My Administration will work with the authors of the bill and other leaders in the Congress, in consultation with the offices of former Presidents, to explore the best ways to achieve these goals going forward. If the Congress returns the bill having appropriately addressed these concerns, I will sign it. For now, I must veto the bill.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
July 22, 2016.

The President's Weekly Address
July 23, 2016

The President. Hi, everybody. I'm here with Senator Elizabeth Warren, one of our strongest advocates for families and consumers like you. And today we want to talk to you about some of the actions we've taken to protect everything you've worked so hard to build.

Eight years ago, after some big banks made irresponsible and risky bets with your money, we almost slipped into another Great Depression. While the recklessness started on Wall Street, it didn't take long before it led to real pain for folks on Main Street. It would cost millions of our fellow Americans their jobs, homes, and savings.

Senator Elizabeth A. Warren. The financial crisis wasn't an unstoppable act of nature. The whole thing could have been avoided, but we didn't have rules in place to stop Wall Street from taking enormous risks that threatened the whole economy. We didn't have strong protections to keep consumers from being cheated by tricks and traps on financial contracts.

The President. So, when I took office, in the darkest days of the crisis, I promised you we wouldn't just recover from the crisis, we'd rebuild our economy on a new foundation to make sure a crisis like that never happens again.

Sen. Warren. And President Obama delivered. He signed into law the toughest Wall Street reforms and strongest consumer protections in generations. Now, trust me, I'm a pretty tough grader, but these new rules are making our financial system more transparent. They're getting rid of a lot of fine print, and they're making sure that if the bank screws up, you have someone to call so you don't get stuck with the bill.

The President. Now, these reforms have already made our financial system safer and more resilient. And part of passing these strong consumer protections meant establishing the first-ever Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, based on an idea that Senator Warren came up with before the crisis even began.

Sen. Warren. And every day, the good people at that independent agency crack down on dishonest and deceptive practices like the ones that helped cause the crash. The proof is in the more than 27 million consumers who, in just 5 years, have gotten refunds and other relief from credit card companies, payday lenders, debt collectors, and others who tried to rip them off.

The President. Before the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, you didn't have a strong ally to turn to if your bank took advantage of you or if you were being harassed or charged inappropriate fees. Now you do.

Sen. Warren. And the Bureau is also there to help you make better informed decisions. Before you take out a mortgage or a loan for college or a new car, check out the agency's website, CFPB.gov. It can help you sift through the confusing, but very important details.

The President. Republicans, and big banks who opposed these commonsense rules, claimed they'd hurt the economy. But we've seen what happened to the economy when we didn't have these rules in place. And despite their claims, our economy is stronger today than it was before the crisis. Since we dug out from the worst of it, our businesses have added almost 15 million new jobs. Corporate profits are up, lending to businesses is up, and the stock market has hit an alltime high. So the idea this was bad for business just doesn't hold water. Now our task should be making sure we build on those gains and make sure they're felt by everybody.

Sen. Warren. But every year, like clockwork, big banks and their Republican allies in Congress try to roll back these protections and try to undermine the consumer watchdog, whose only job is to look out for you. Their nominee for President promises to dismantle all of it. Now, look, they may have forgotten about the crisis, but working families sure haven't, and we haven't either. And that's why we're not going to let them give Wall Street the ability to threaten our economy all over again.

The President. Whether you're a Democrat, a Republican, or an Independent, if you're a hard-working American who plays by the rules, you should expect Wall Street to play by the rules too. And that's what we're fighting for.

Sen. Warren. Yes. It's about basic fairness for everyone.

The President. And it's about responsibility from everyone. Thanks to leaders like Senator Warren, our country, our economy, and our families are better off. Let's keep it that way. And thanks for being here, Elizabeth.

Sen. Warren. And thanks for having me, Mr. President.

The President. Have a great weekend, everybody.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 11:40 a.m. on July 15 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on July 23. In the address, Sen. Warren referred to Republican Presidential nominee Donald J. Trump. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 22, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on July 23. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on Representative Deborah Wasserman Schultz's Resignation as Chair of the Democratic National Committee
July 24, 2016

For the last 8 years, Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz has had my back. This afternoon I called her to let her know that I am grateful. Her leadership of the DNC has meant that we had someone who brought Democrats together not just for my reelection campaign, but for accomplishing the shared goals we have had for our country. Her critical role in supporting our economic recovery, our fights for social and civil justice and providing health care for all Americans will be a hallmark of her tenure as party chair. Her fundraising and organizing skills were matched only by her passion, her commitment and her warmth. And no one works harder for her constituents in Congress than Debbie Wasserman Schultz. Michelle and I are grateful for her efforts, we know she will continue to serve our country as a Member of Congress from Florida, and she will always be our dear friend.

Directive on United States Cyber Incident Coordination
July 26, 2016

Presidential Policy Directive/PPD–41

Subject: United States Cyber Incident Coordination

The advent of networked technology has spurred innovation, cultivated knowledge, encouraged free expression, and increased the Nation's economic prosperity. However, the same infrastructure that enables these benefits is vulnerable to malicious activity, malfunction, human error, and acts of nature, placing the Nation and its people at risk. Cyber incidents are a fact of contemporary life, and significant cyber incidents are occurring with increasing frequency, impacting public and private infrastructure located in the United States and abroad.

United States preparedness efforts have positioned the Nation to manage a broad range of threats and hazards effectively. Every day, Federal law enforcement and those agencies responsible for network defense in the United States manage, respond to, and investigate cyber incidents in order to ensure the security of our information and communications infrastructure. The private sector and government agencies have a shared vital interest in protecting the Nation from malicious cyber activity and managing cyber incidents and their consequences. The nature of cyberspace requires individuals, organizations, and the government to all play roles in incident response. Furthermore, effective incident response efforts will help support an open, interoperable, secure, and reliable information and communications infrastructure that promotes trade and commerce, strengthens international security, fosters free expression, and reinforces the privacy and security of our citizens.

While the vast majority of cyber incidents can be handled through existing policies, certain cyber incidents that have significant impacts on an entity, our national security, or the broader economy require a unique approach to response efforts. These significant cyber incidents demand unity of effort within the Federal Government and especially close coordination between the public and private sectors.

I. Scope

This Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) sets forth principles governing the Federal Government's response to any cyber incident, whether involving government or private sector entities. For significant cyber incidents, this PPD also establishes lead Federal agencies and an architecture for coordinating the broader Federal Government response. This PPD also

requires the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security to maintain updated contact information for public use to assist entities affected by cyber incidents in reporting those incidents to the proper authorities.

II. Definitions

A. *Cyber incident.* An event occurring on or conducted through a computer network that actually or imminently jeopardizes the integrity, confidentiality, or availability of computers, information or communications systems or networks, physical or virtual infrastructure controlled by computers or information systems, or information resident thereon. For purposes of this directive, a cyber incident may include a vulnerability in an information system, system security procedures, internal controls, or implementation that could be exploited by a threat source.

B. *Significant cyber incident.* A cyber incident that is (or group of related cyber incidents that together are) likely to result in demonstrable harm to the national security interests, foreign relations, or economy of the United States or to the public confidence, civil liberties, or public health and safety of the American people.

III. Principles Guiding Incident Response

In carrying out incident response activities for any cyber incident, the Federal Government will be guided by the following principles:

A. *Shared Responsibility.* Individuals, the private sector, and government agencies have a shared vital interest and complementary roles and responsibilities in protecting the Nation from malicious cyber activity and managing cyber incidents and their consequences.

B. *Risk-Based Response.* The Federal Government will determine its response actions and the resources it brings to bear based on an assessment of the risks posed to an entity, our national security, foreign relations, the broader economy, public confidence, civil liberties, or the public health and safety of the American people.

C. *Respecting affected entities.* To the extent permitted under law, Federal Government responders will safeguard details of the incident, as well as privacy and civil liberties, and sensitive private sector information, and generally will defer to affected entities in notifying other affected private sector entities and the public. In the event a significant Federal Government interest is served by issuing a public statement concerning an incident, Federal responders will coordinate their approach with the affected entities to the extent possible.

D. *Unity of Governmental Effort.* Various government entities possess different roles, responsibilities, authorities, and capabilities that can all be brought to bear on cyber incidents. These efforts must be coordinated to achieve optimal results. Whichever Federal agency first becomes aware of a cyber incident will rapidly notify other relevant Federal agencies in order to facilitate a unified Federal response and ensure that the right combination of agencies responds to a particular incident. State, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) governments also have responsibilities, authorities, capabilities, and resources that can be used to respond to a cyber incident; therefore, the Federal Government must be prepared to partner with SLTT governments in its cyber incident response efforts. The transnational nature of the Internet and communications infrastructure requires the United States to coordinate with international partners, as appropriate, in managing cyber incidents.

E. *Enabling Restoration and Recovery.* Federal response activities will be conducted in a manner to facilitate restoration and

recovery of an entity that has experienced a cyber incident, balancing investigative and national security requirements, public health and safety, and the need to return to normal operations as quickly as possible.

IV. Concurrent Lines of Effort

In responding to any cyber incident, Federal agencies shall undertake three concurrent lines of effort: threat response; asset response; and intelligence support and related activities. In addition, when a Federal agency is an affected entity, it shall undertake a fourth concurrent line of effort to manage the effects of the cyber incident on its operations, customers, and workforce.

A. Threat response activities include conducting appropriate law enforcement and national security investigative activity at the affected entity's site; collecting evidence and gathering intelligence; providing attribution; linking related incidents; identifying additional affected entities; identifying threat pursuit and disruption opportunities; developing and executing courses of action to mitigate the immediate threat; and facilitating information sharing and operational coordination with asset response.

B. Asset response activities include furnishing technical assistance to affected entities to protect their assets, mitigate vulnerabilities, and reduce impacts of cyber incidents; identifying other entities that may be at risk and assessing their risk to the same or similar vulnerabilities; assessing potential risks to the sector or region, including potential cascading effects, and developing courses of action to mitigate these risks; facilitating information sharing and operational coordination with threat response; and providing guidance on how best to utilize Federal resources and capabilities in a timely, effective manner to speed recovery.

Threat and asset responders will share some responsibilities and activities, which may include communicating with affected entities to understand the nature of the cyber incident; providing guidance to affected entities on available Federal resources and capabilities; promptly disseminating through appropriate channels intelligence and information learned in the course of the response; and facilitating information sharing and operational coordination with other Federal Government entities.

C. Intelligence support and related activities facilitate the building of situational threat awareness and sharing of related intelligence; the integrated analysis of threat trends and events; the identification of knowledge gaps; and the ability to degrade or mitigate adversary threat capabilities.

D. An affected Federal agency shall engage in a variety of efforts to manage the impact of a cyber incident, which may include maintaining business or operational continuity; addressing adverse financial impacts; protection of privacy; managing liability risks; complying with legal and regulatory requirements (including disclosure and notification); engaging in communications with employees or other affected individuals; and dealing with external affairs (e.g., media and congressional inquiries). The affected Federal agency will have primary responsibility for this line of effort.

When a cyber incident affects a private entity, the Federal Government typically will not play a role in this line of effort, but it will remain cognizant of the affected entity's response activities, consistent with the principles above and in coordination with the affected entity. The relevant sector-specific agency (SSA) will generally coordinate the Federal Government's efforts to understand the potential business or operational impact of

a cyber incident on private sector critical infrastructure.

V. Architecture of Federal Government Response Coordination for Significant Cyber Incidents[1]

In order to respond effectively to significant cyber incidents, the Federal Government will coordinate its activities in three ways:

A. National Policy Coordination[2]

The Cyber Response Group (CRG), in support of the National Security Council (NSC) Deputies and Principals Committees, and accountable through the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism (APHSCT) to the NSC chaired by the President, shall coordinate the development and implementation of United States Government policy and strategy with respect to significant cyber incidents affecting the United States or its interests abroad.

B. National Operational Coordination

1. Agency Enhanced Coordination Procedures. Each Federal agency that regularly participates in the CRG, including SSAs, shall establish and follow enhanced coordination procedures as defined in the annex to this PPD in situations in which the demands of responding to a significant cyber incident exceed its standing capacity.

2. Cyber Unified Coordination Group. A Cyber Unified Coordination Group (UCG) shall serve as the primary method for coordinating between and among Federal agencies in response to a significant cyber incident as well as for integrating private sector partners into incident response efforts, as appropriate. A Cyber UCG shall be formed at the direction of the NSC Principals Committee, Deputies Committee, or the CRG, or when two or more Federal agencies that generally participate in the CRG, including relevant SSAs, request its formation. A Cyber UCG shall also be formed when a significant cyber incident affects critical infrastructure owners and operators identified by the Secretary of Homeland Security as owning or operating critical infrastructure for which a cyber incident could reasonably result in catastrophic regional or national effects on public health or safety, economic security, or national security.

A Cyber UCG will normally consist of Federal lead agencies for threat response, asset response, and intelligence support, but will also include SSAs, if a cyber incident affects or is likely to affect sectors they represent. In addition, as required by the scope, nature, and facts of a particular significant cyber incident, a Cyber UCG may include participation from other Federal agencies, SLTT governments, nongovernmental organizations, international counterparts, or the private sector.

Following the formation of a Cyber UCG, Federal agencies responding to the incident shall assign appropriate senior executives, staff, and resources to execute the agency's responsibilities as part of a Cyber UCG. The Cyber UCG is intended to result in unity of effort and not to alter agency authorities or leadership, oversight, or command responsibilities. Unless mutually agreed upon between agency heads or their designees, and consistent with applicable legal authorities such as the

[1] Additional details regarding the Federal Government's coordination architecture for significant cyber incidents are contained in an annex to this PPD.

[2] This sub-section supersedes NSPD–54/HSPD–23, paragraph 13, concerning the National Cyber Response Coordination Group.

Economy Act of 1932 (31 U.S.C. 1535), Federal departments and agencies will maintain operational control over their respective agency assets.

3. Federal lead agencies. In order to ensure that the Cyber UCG achieves maximum effectiveness in coordinating responses to significant cyber incidents, the following agencies shall serve as Federal lead agencies for the specified line of effort:

    a. In view of the fact that significant cyber incidents will often involve at least the possibility of a nation-state actor or have some other national security nexus, the Department of Justice, acting through the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the National Cyber Investigative Joint Task Force, shall be the Federal lead agency for threat response activities.
    b. The Department of Homeland Security, acting through the National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center, shall be the Federal lead agency for asset response activities.
    c. The Office of the Director of National Intelligence, through the Cyber Threat Intelligence Integration Center, shall be the Federal lead agency for intelligence support and related activities.

    Drawing upon the resources and capabilities across the Federal Government, the Federal lead agencies are responsible for:

    a. Coordinating any multi-agency threat or asset response activities to provide unity of effort, to include coordinating with any agency providing support to the incident, to include SSAs in recognition of their unique expertise;
    b. Ensuring that their respective lines of effort are coordinated with other Cyber UCG participants and affected entities, as appropriate;
    c. Identifying and recommending to the CRG, if elevation is required, any additional Federal Government resources or actions necessary to appropriately respond to and recover from the incident; and
    d. Coordinating with affected entities on various aspects of threat, asset, and affected entity response activities through a Cyber UCG, as appropriate.

C. Field-Level Coordination

Field-level representatives of the Federal asset or threat response lead agencies shall ensure that they effectively coordinate their activities within their respective lines of effort with each other and the affected entity. Such representatives may be co-located with the affected entity.

VI. Unified Public Communications

The Departments of Homeland Security and Justice shall maintain and update as necessary a fact sheet outlining how private individuals and organizations can contact relevant Federal agencies about a cyber incident.

VII. Relationship to Existing Policy

Nothing in this directive alters, supersedes, or limits the authorities of Federal agencies to carry out their functions and duties consistent with applicable legal authorities and other Presidential guidance and directives. This directive generally relies on and furthers the implementation of existing policies and explains how United States cyber incident response structures interact with those existing policies. In particular, this policy complements and builds upon PPD–8 on National Preparedness of March 30, 2011. By integrat-

ing cyber and traditional preparedness efforts, the Nation will be ready to manage incidents that include both cyber and physical effects.

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this directive.

Annex to the Directive on United States Cyber Incident Coordination
July 26, 2016

Annex to Presidential Policy Directive/PPD–41

Subject: Federal Government Coordination Architecture for Significant Cyber Incidents

I. Scope

This annex to PPD–41, United States Cyber Incident Coordination Policy, provides further details concerning the Federal Government coordination architecture for significant cyber incidents and prescribes certain implementation tasks.

II. Coordination Architecture

A. National Policy Coordination

The Cyber Response Group (CRG) shall be chaired by the Special Assistant to the President and Cybersecurity Coordinator (Chair), or an equivalent successor, and shall convene on a regular basis and as needed at the request of the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism and Deputy National Security Advisor. Federal departments and agencies, including relevant cyber centers, shall be invited to participate in the CRG, as appropriate, based on their respective roles, responsibilities, and expertise or in the circumstances of a given incident or grouping of incidents. CRG participants shall generally include senior representatives from the Departments of State, the Treasury, Defense (DOD), Justice (DOJ), Commerce, Energy, Homeland Security (DHS) and its National Protection and Programs Directorate, and the United States Secret Service, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the National Cyber Investigative Joint Task Force, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the National Security Agency. The Federal Communications Commission shall be invited to participate should the Chair assess that its inclusion is warranted by the circumstances and to the extent the Commission determines such participation is consistent with its statutory authority and legal obligations.

The CRG shall:

i. Coordinate the development and implementation of the Federal Government's policies, strategies, and procedures for responding to significant cyber incidents;
ii. Receive regular updates from the Federal cybersecurity centers and agencies on significant cyber incidents and measures being taken to resolve or respond to those incidents;
iii. Resolve issues elevated to it by subordinate bodies as may be established, such as a Cyber Unified Coordination Group (UCG);
iv. Collaborate with the Counterterrorism Security Group and Domestic Resilience Group when a cross-disciplinary response to a significant cyber incident is required;
v. Identify and consider options for responding to significant cyber incidents, and make recommendations to the Deputies Committee, where higher-level guidance is required, in accordance with PPD–1 on Organization of the National Security Council System of February 13, 2009, or any successor; and

vi. Consider the policy implications for public messaging in response to significant cyber incidents, and coordinate a communications strategy, as necessary, regarding a significant cyber incident.

B. National Operational Coordination

To promote unity of effort in response to a significant cyber incident, a Cyber UCG shall:

i. Coordinate the cyber incident response in a manner consistent with the principles described in section III of this directive;
ii. Ensure all appropriate Federal agencies, including sector-specific agencies (SSAs), are incorporated into the incident response;
iii. Coordinate the development and execution of response and recovery tasks, priorities, and planning efforts, including international and cross-sector outreach, necessary to respond appropriately to the incident and to speed recovery;
iv. Facilitate the rapid and appropriate sharing of information and intelligence among Cyber UCG participants on the incident response and recovery activities;
v. Coordinate consistent, accurate, and appropriate communications regarding the incident to affected parties and stakeholders, including the public as appropriate; and
vi. For incidents that include cyber and physical effects, form a combined UCG with the lead Federal agency or with any UCG established to manage the physical effects of the incident under the National Response Framework developed pursuant to PPD–8 on National Preparedness.

SSAs shall be members of the UCG for significant cyber incidents that affect or are likely to affect their respective sectors. As set forth in Presidential Policy Directive 21, the SSAs for critical infrastructure sectors are as follows: DHS (Chemical, Commercial Facilities, Communications, Critical Manufacturing, Dams, Emergency Services, Government Facilities, Information Technology, Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste, and Transportation Systems); DOD (Defense Industrial Base); Department of Energy (Energy); Department of the Treasury (Financial Services); Department of Agriculture (Food and Agriculture); Department of Health and Human Services (Healthcare and Public Health, and Food and Agriculture); General Services Administration (Government Facilities); Department of Transportation (Transportation Systems); and the Environmental Protection Agency (Water and Wastewater Systems).

A Cyber UCG shall operate in a manner that is consistent with the need to protect intelligence and law enforcement sources, methods, operations, and investigations, the privacy of individuals, and sensitive private sector information.

A Cyber UCG shall dissolve when enhanced coordination procedures for threat and asset response are no longer required or the authorities, capabilities, or resources of more than one Federal agency are no longer required to manage the remaining facets of the Federal response to an incident.

III. Federal Government Response to Incidents Affecting Federal Networks

Nothing in this directive alters an agency's obligations to comply with the requirements of the Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014 (FISMA) or Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidelines related to responding to an "incident," "breach," or "major incident" as defined in that statute and OMB guidance. Federal agencies shall follow OMB guidance to determine whether an incident is considered a "major incident" pursuant to FISMA. If the cyber incident meets the threshold for a "major incident," it is also a "significant cyber incident" for purposes of this directive and shall be managed in accordance with this directive.

A. Civilian Federal Networks

The Director of OMB oversees Federal agency information security policies and practices. The Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Director of OMB, administers the implementation of Federal agency information security policies and practices and operates the Federal information security incident center. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) develops standards and guidelines for Federal information systems that are mandatory for Federal agencies to implement.

Federal agencies shall respond to significant cyber incidents in accordance with this directive and applicable policies and procedures, including the reporting of incidents to DHS as required by the U.S. Computer Emergency Readiness Team Federal incident notification guidelines.

Where the effects of a significant cyber incident are limited to the operational activities of an individual Federal agency, that affected agency shall maintain primary authority over the affected assets and be responsible for managing the restoration services and related networks, systems, and applications and making the decision to restart an affected system. DHS and other Federal agencies shall provide support as appropriate.

Where a significant cyber incident has an impact on multiple Federal agencies or on the integrity, confidentiality, or availability of services to the public, the decision to restart an affected system rests with the owning Federal agency, but OMB and the Federal lead agencies for threat and asset response shall provide a consolidated, timely written recommendation, with appropriate caveats and conditions, to help inform that owning agency's decision.

B. DOD Information Network

The Secretary of Defense shall be responsible for managing the threat and asset response to cyber incidents affecting the Department of Defense Information Network, including restoration activities, with support from other Federal agencies as appropriate.

C. Intelligence Community Networks

The Director of National Intelligence shall be responsible for managing the threat and asset response for the integrated defense of the Intelligence Community (IC) information environment through the Intelligence Community Security Coordination Center, in conjunction with IC mission partners and with support from other Federal agencies, as appropriate.

IV. Implementation and Assessment

Federal agencies shall take the following actions to implement this directive:

A. Charter

Within 90 days of the date of this directive, the National Security Council (NSC) staff shall update the CRG charter to account for and support the policy set forth herein, which shall be submitted to the President through the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism.

B. Enhanced Coordination Procedures

Each Federal agency that regularly participates in the CRG, including SSAs, shall ensure that it has the standing capacity to execute its role in cyber incident response. To prepare for situations in which the demands of a significant cyber incident exceed its standing capacity, each such agency shall, within 90 days of the date of this directive, establish enhanced coordination procedures that, when activated, bring dedicated leadership, supporting personnel, facilities (physical and communications), and internal processes enabling it to manage a significant cyber incident under demands that would exceed its capacity to coordinate under normal operating conditions.

Within 90 days of the date of this directive, the SSAs shall develop or update sector-specific procedures, as needed and in consultation with the sector(s), for enhanced coordination to support response to a significant cyber incident, consistent with this directive.

Enhanced coordination procedures shall identify the appropriate pathways for communicating with other Federal agencies during a significant cyber incident, including the relevant agency points-of-contact, and for notifying the CRG that enhanced coordination procedures were activated or initiated; highlight internal communications and decisionmaking processes that are consistent with effective incident coordination; and outline processes for maintaining these procedures.

In addition, each Federal agency's enhanced coordination procedures shall identify the agency's processes and existing capabilities to coordinate cyber incident response activities in a manner consistent with this directive. The procedures shall identify a trained senior executive to oversee that agency's participation in a Cyber UCG. SSAs shall have a trained senior executive for each of the sectors for which it is the designated SSA under Presidential Policy Directive 21.

Within 120 days of the date of this directive, the SSAs shall coordinate with critical infrastructure owners and operators to synchronize sector-specific planning consistent with this directive.

C. Training

Within 150 days of the date of this directive, the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall make necessary updates to its existing Unified Coordination training to incorporate the tenets of this directive.

Within 150 days of the date of this directive, Federal agencies shall update cyber incident coordination training to incorporate the tenets of this directive.

Federal agencies shall identify and maintain a cadre of personnel qualified and trained in the National Incident Management System and Unified Coordination to manage and respond to a significant cyber incident. These personnel will provide necessary expertise to support tasking and decisionmaking by a Cyber UCG.

D. Exercises

Within 180 days of the date of this directive, Federal agencies shall incorporate the tenets of this policy in cyber incident response exercises. This will include exercises conducted as part of the National Exercise Program. Exercises shall be conducted at a frequency necessary to ensure Federal agencies are prepared to execute the plans and procedures called for under this directive. When appropriate, exercises shall consider the effectiveness of the end-to-end information sharing process.

E. Cyber UCG Post-Incident Review

Upon dissolution of each Cyber UCG, the Chair of the CRG shall direct a review of a Cyber UCG's response to a significant cyber incident at issue and the preparation of a report based on that review to be provided to the CRG within 30 days. Federal agencies shall modify any plans or procedures for which they are responsible under this directive as appropriate or necessary in light of that report.

F. National Cyber Incident Response Plan

Within 180 days of the date of this directive, DHS and DOJ, in coordination with the SSAs, shall submit a concept of operations for the Cyber UCG to the President, through the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism and the Director of OMB, that is consistent with the principles, policies, and coordination architecture set forth in this directive. This concept of operations shall further develop how the Cyber UCG and field elements of the Federal coordination architecture will work in practice for significant cyber incidents, including mechanisms for coordinating with Federal agencies managing the physical effects of an incident that has both cyber and physical elements and for integration of private sector entities in response activities when appropriate. The Secretary of Homeland Security shall, as appropriate, incorporate or reference this concept of operations in the Cyber Incident Annex re-

quired by section 205 of the Cybersecurity Act of 2015.

Within 180 days of the date of this directive, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in coordination with the Attorney General, the Secretary of Defense, and the SSAs, shall submit a national cyber incident response plan to address cybersecurity risks to critical infrastructure to the President, through the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism and the Director of OMB, that is consistent with the principles, policies, and coordination architecture set forth in this directive. The Secretary of Homeland Security shall ensure that the plan satisfies section 7 of the National Cybersecurity Protection Act of 2014. This plan shall be developed in consultation with SLTT governments, sector coordinating councils, information sharing and analysis organizations, owners and operators of critical infrastructure, and other appropriate entities and individuals. The plan shall take into account how these stakeholders will coordinate with Federal agencies to mitigate, respond to, and recover from cyber incidents affecting critical infrastructure.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this annex.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Lebanon
July 27, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to Lebanon that was declared in Executive Order 13441 of August 1, 2007, is to continue in effect beyond August 1, 2016.

Certain ongoing activities, such as continuing arms transfers to Hizballah that include increasingly sophisticated weapons systems, undermine Lebanese sovereignty, contribute to political and economic instability in the region, and continue to constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in the Executive Order 13441 with respect to Lebanon.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
July 27, 2016

The President. Thank you. Thank you so much. Thank you, everybody.

Audience members. Yes, we can! Yes, we can! Yes, we can!

The President. Thank you. Thank you so much, everybody.

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you back!

Hello, America! Hello, Democrats!

Audience members. Hello!

The President. So, 12 years ago tonight, I addressed this convention for the very first time.

You met my two little girls, Malia and Sasha, now two amazing young women who just fill me with pride. You fell for my brilliant wife and partner Michelle, who has made me a better father and a better man, who's gone on to inspire our Nation as First Lady, and who somehow hasn't aged a day.

I know, the same cannot be said for me. [*Laughter*] My girls remind me all the time: "Wow, you've changed so much, Daddy." [*Laughter*] And then they try to clean it up: "Not bad, you're just more mature." [*Laughter*]

And it's true. I was so young that first time in Boston. And look, I'll admit it, maybe I was a little nervous, addressing such a big crowd. But I was filled with faith: faith in America, the generous, big-hearted, hopeful country that made my story—that made all of our stories—possible.

Now, a lot's happened over the years. And while this Nation has been tested by war and it's been tested by recession and all manner of challenges, I stand before you again tonight, after almost two terms as your President, to tell you I am more optimistic about the future of America than ever before.

How could I not be, after all that we've achieved together? After the worst recession in 80 years, we fought our way back. We've seen deficits come down, 401(k)s recover, an auto industry set new records, unemployment reach 8-year lows, and our businesses create 15 million new jobs.

After a century of trying, we declared that health care in America is not a privilege for a few, it is a right for everybody. After decades of talk, we finally began to wean ourselves off foreign oil. We doubled our production of clean energy. We brought more of our troops home to their families, and we delivered justice to Usama bin Laden. Through diplomacy, we shut down Iran's nuclear weapons program. We opened up a new chapter with the people of Cuba, brought nearly 200 nations together around a climate agreement that could save this planet for our children.

We put policies in place to help students with loans, protect consumers from fraud, cut veterans' homelessness almost in half. And through countless acts of quiet courage, America learned that love has no limits, and marriage equality is now a reality across the land.

By so many measures, our country is stronger and more prosperous than it was when we started. And through every victory and every setback, I've insisted that change is never easy and never quick, that we wouldn't meet all of our challenges in one term or one Presidency or even in one lifetime.

So tonight I'm here to tell you that, yes, we've still got more work to do. More work to do for every American still in need of a good job or a raise, paid leave or a decent retirement; for every child who needs a sturdier ladder out of poverty or a world-class education; for everyone who has not yet felt the progress of these past 7½ years. We need to keep making our streets safer and our criminal justice system fairer, our homeland more secure, our world more peaceful and sustainable for the next generation. We're not done perfecting our Union or living up to our founding creed that all of us are created equal, all of us are free in the eyes of God.

And that work involves a big choice this November. I think it's fair to say, this is not your typical election. It's not just a choice between parties or policies, the usual debates between left and right. This is a more fundamental choice: about who we are as a people, and whether we stay true to this great American experiment in self-government.

Look, we Democrats have always had plenty of differences with the Republican Party, and there's nothing wrong with that. It's precisely this contest of idea that pushes our country forward. But what we heard in Cleveland last week wasn't particularly Republican, and it sure wasn't conservative. What we heard was a deeply pessimistic vision of a country where we turn against each other and turn away from the rest of the world. There were no serious solutions to pressing problems, just the fanning of resentment and blame and anger and hate.

And that is not the America I know. The America I know is full of courage and optimism and ingenuity. The America I know is decent and generous. Sure, we have real anxieties:

about paying the bills and protecting our kids, caring for a sick parent. We get frustrated with political gridlock and worry about racial divisions. We are shocked and saddened by the madness of Orlando or Nice. There are pockets of America that never recovered from factory closures; men who took pride in hard work and providing for their families who now feel forgotten; parents who wonder whether their kids will have the same opportunities that we had.

All of that is real. We are challenged to do better; to be better.

But as I've traveled this country, through all 50 States, as I've rejoiced with you and mourned with you, what I have also seen, more than anything, is what is right with America. I see people working hard and starting businesses. I see people teaching kids and serving our country. I see engineers inventing stuff, doctors coming up with new cures. I see a younger generation full of energy and new ideas, not constrained by what is, ready to seize what ought to be.

And most of all, I see Americans of every party, every background, every faith who believe that we are stronger together: Black, White, Latino, Asian, Native American; young, old; gay, straight; men, women, folks with disabilities, all pledging allegiance, under the same proud flag, to this big, bold country that we love. That's what I see. That's the America I know!

And there is only one candidate in this race who believes in that future, has devoted her life to that future; a mother and a grandmother who would do anything to help our children thrive; a leader with real plans to break down barriers and blast through glass ceilings and widen the circle of opportunity to every single American: the next President of the United States, Hillary Clinton.

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. Now, 8 years ago——

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. That's right!

Let me tell you, 8 years ago, you may remember Hillary and I were rivals for the Democratic nomination. We battled for a year and a half. Let me tell you, it was tough, because Hillary was tough. I was worn out. [*Laughter*] She was doing everything I was doing, but just like Ginger Rogers, it was backwards in heels. And every time I thought I might have had the race won, Hillary just came back stronger.

But after it was all over, I asked Hillary to join my team. And she was a little surprised. Some of my staff was surprised. [*Laughter*] But ultimately, she said yes, because she knew that what was at stake was bigger than either of us. And for 4 years—for 4 years, I had a front-row seat to her intelligence, her judgment, and her discipline. I came to realize that her unbelievable work ethic wasn't for praise, it wasn't for attention; that she was in this for everyone who needs a champion. I understood that after all these years, she has never forgotten just who she's fighting for.

Hillary has still got the tenacity that she had as a young woman, working at the Children's Defense Fund, going door to door to ultimately make sure kids with disabilities could get a quality education.

She's still got the heart she showed as our First Lady, working with Congress to help push through a Children's Health Insurance Program that to this day protects millions of kids.

She's still seared with the memory of every American she met who lost loved ones on 9/11, which is why, as a Senator from New York, she fought so hard for funding to help first responders, to help the city rebuild; why, as Secretary of State, she sat with me in the Situation Room and forcefully argued in favor of the mission that took out bin Laden.

You know, nothing truly prepares you for the demands of the Oval Office. You can read about it. You can study it. But until you've sat at that desk, you don't know what it's like to manage a global crisis or send young people to war. But Hillary has been in the room; she's been part of those decisions. She knows what's at stake in the decisions our Government makes, what's at stake for the working family, for the senior citizen, or the small-business owner, for the soldier, for the veteran. And even in the midst of crisis, she listens to

people, and she keeps her cool, and she treats everybody with respect. And no matter how daunting the odds, no matter how much people try to knock her down, she never, ever quits.

That is the Hillary I know. That's the Hillary I've come to admire. And that's why I can say with confidence there has never been a man or a woman—not me, not Bill, nobody—more qualified than Hillary Clinton to serve as President of the United States of America.

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. I hope you don't mind, Bill, but I was just telling the truth, man. [*Laughter*]

And by the way, in case you're wondering about her judgment, take a look at her choice of running mate. Tim Kaine is as good a man, as humble and as committed a public servant as anybody that I know. I know his family. I love Anne. I love their kids. He will be a great Vice President. He will make Hillary a better President, just like my dear friend and brother, Joe Biden, has made me a better President.

Now, Hillary has real plans to address the concerns she's heard from you on the campaign trail. She's got specific ideas to invest in new jobs, to help workers share in their company's profits, to help put kids in preschool and put students through college without taking on a ton of debt. That's what leaders do.

And then there's Donald Trump. [*Laughter*]

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo, vote.

Audience members. Vote! Vote! Vote!

The President. You know, the Donald is not really a plans guy. [*Laughter*] He's not really a facts guy, either. He calls himself a business guy, which is true, but I have to say, I know plenty of business men and women who've achieved remarkable success without leaving a trail of lawsuits and unpaid workers and people feeling like they got cheated.

Does anyone really believe that a guy who's spent his 70 years on this Earth showing no regard for working people is suddenly going to be your champion? Your voice?

Audience members. No!

The President. If so, you should vote for him. But if you're someone who's truly concerned about paying your bills, if you're really concerned about pocketbook issues and seeing the economy grow and creating more opportunity for everybody, then the choice isn't even close. If you want someone with a lifelong track record of fighting for higher wages and better benefits and a fairer Tax Code and a bigger voice for workers and stronger regulations on Wall Street, then you should vote for Hillary Clinton.

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. And if you're rightly concerned about who's going to keep you and your family safe in a dangerous world, well, the choice is even clearer. Hillary Clinton is respected around the world, not just by leaders, but by the people they serve.

I have to say this. People outside of the United States do not understand what's going on in this election. [*Laughter*] They really don't. Because they know Hillary. They've seen her work. She's worked closely with our intelligence teams, our diplomats, our military. She has the judgment and the experience and the temperament to meet the threat from terrorism. It's not new to her. Our troops have pounded ISIL without mercy, taking out their leaders, taking back territory. And I know Hillary won't relent until ISIL is destroyed. She will finish the job. And she will do it without resorting to torture or banning entire religions from entering our country. She is fit and she is ready to be the next Commander in Chief.

Meanwhile, Donald Trump calls our military a disaster. Apparently, he doesn't know the men and women who make up the strongest fighting force the world has ever known. He suggests America is weak. He must not hear the billions of men and women and children, from the Baltics to Burma, who still look to America to be the light of freedom and dignity and human rights. He cozies up to Putin, praises Saddam Hussein, tells our NATO allies that stood by our side after 9/11 that they have to pay up if they want our protection.

Well, America's promises do not come with a price tag. We meet our commitments. We bear our burdens. That's one of the reasons why almost every country on Earth sees Amer-

ica as stronger and more respected today than they did 8 years ago when I took office.

America is already great. America is already strong. And I promise you, our strength, our greatness, does not depend on Donald Trump. In fact, it doesn't depend on any one person. And that, in the end, may be the biggest difference in this election: the meaning of our democracy.

Ronald Reagan called America "a shining city on a hill." Donald Trump calls it "a divided crime scene" that only he can fix. It doesn't matter to him that illegal immigration and the crime rate are as low as they've been in decades, because he's not actually offering any real solutions to those issues. He's just offering slogans, and he's offering fear. He's betting that if he scares enough people, he might score just enough votes to win this election.

And that's another bet that Donald Trump will lose. And the reason he'll lose it is because he's selling the American people short. We're not a fragile people. We're not a frightful people. Our power doesn't come from some self-declared savior promising that he alone can restore order as long as we do things his way. We don't look to be ruled. Our power comes from those immortal declarations first put to paper right here in Philadelphia all those years ago: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that we the people can form a more perfect Union.

That's who we are. That's our birthright: the capacity to shape our own destiny. That's what drove patriots to choose revolution over tyranny and our GIs to liberate a continent. It's what gave women the courage to reach for the ballot, and marchers to cross a bridge in Selma, and workers to organize and fight for collective bargaining and better wages.

America has never been about what one person says he'll do for us. It's about what can be achieved by us, together, through the hard and slow and sometimes frustrating, but ultimately enduring work of self-government.

And that's what Hillary Clinton understands. She knows that this is a big, diverse country. She has seen it. She's traveled. She's talked to folks. And she understands that most issues are rarely black and white. She understands that even when you're a hundred-percent right, getting things done requires compromise; that democracy doesn't work if we constantly demonize each other. She knows that for progress to happen, we have to listen to each other and see ourselves in each other and fight for our principles, but also fight to find common ground, no matter how elusive that may sometimes seem.

Hillary knows we can work through racial divides in this country when we realize the worry Black parents feel when their son leaves the house isn't so different than what a brave cop's family feels when he puts on the blue and goes to work; that we can honor police and treat every community fairly. We can do that. And she knows that acknowledging problems that have festered for decades isn't making race relations worse; it's creating the possibility for people of good will to join and make things better.

Hillary knows we can insist on a lawful and orderly immigration system while still seeing striving students and their toiling parents as loving families, not criminals or rapists; families that came here for the same reason our forebears came: to work and to study and to make a better life, in a place where we can talk and worship and love as we please. She knows their dream is quintessentially American, and the American Dream is something no wall will ever contain. These are the things that Hillary knows.

It can be frustrating, this business of democracy. Trust me, I know. Hillary knows too. When the other side refuses to compromise, progress can stall. People are hurt by the inaction. Supporters can grow impatient and worry that you're not trying hard enough, that you've maybe sold out. But I promise you, when we keep at it, when we change enough minds, when we deliver enough votes, then progress does happen. And if you doubt that, just ask the 20 million more people who have health care today. Just ask the marine who proudly serves his country without hiding the husband that he loves.

Democracy works, America, but we've got to want it, not just during an election year, but all the days in between.

So, if you agree that there's too much inequality in our economy and too much money in our politics, we all need to be as vocal and as organized and as persistent as Bernie Sanders supporters have been during this election. We all need to get out and vote for Democrats up and down the ticket and then hold them accountable until they get the job done.

That's right, feel the Bern!

If you want more justice in the justice system, then we've all got to vote, not just for a President, but for mayors and sheriffs and State's attorneys and State legislators. That's where the criminal law is made. And we've got to work with police and protesters until laws and practices are changed. That's how democracy works.

If you want to fight climate change, we've got to engage not only young people on college campuses, we've got to reach out to the coal miner who's worried about taking care of his family, the single mom worried about gas prices.

If you want to protect our kids and our cops from gun violence, we've got to get the vast majority of Americans, including gun owners, who agree on things like background checks to be just as vocal and just as determined as the gun lobby that blocks change through every funeral that we hold. That is how change happens.

Look, Hillary has got her share of critics. She has been caricatured by the right and by some on the left. She has been accused of everything you can imagine—and some things that you cannot. [*Laughter*] But she knows that's what happens when you're under a microscope for 40 years. She knows that sometimes during those 40 years she's made mistakes, just like I have, just like we all do. That's what happens when we try. That's what happens when you're the kind of citizen Teddy Roosevelt once described: not the timid souls who criticize from the sidelines, but someone "who is actually in the arena . . . who strives valiantly; who errs . . . but who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement."

Hillary Clinton is that woman in the arena. She's been there for us, even if we haven't always noticed. And if you're serious about our democracy, you can't afford to stay home just because she might not align with you on every issue. You've got to get in the arena with her, because democracy isn't a spectator sport. America isn't about "yes, he will." It's about "yes, we can." And we're going to carry Hillary to victory this fall, because that's what the moment demands.

Audience members. Yes, we can! Yes, we can! Yes, we can!

The President. Yes, we can. Not "yes, she can." Not "yes, I can." "Yes, we can."

You know, there's been a lot of talk in this campaign about what America has lost, people who tell us that our way of life is being undermined by pernicious changes and dark forces beyond our control. They tell voters there's a "real America" out there that must be restored. This isn't an idea, by the way, that started with Donald Trump. It's been peddled by politicians for a long time, probably from the start of our Republic.

And it's got me thinking about the story I told you 12 years ago tonight, about my Kansas grandparents and the things they taught me when I was growing up. See, my grandparents, they came from the heartland. Their ancestors began settling there about 200 years ago. I don't know if they had their birth certificates, but—[*laughter*]—they were there. And—[*applause*]. They were Scotch-Irish mostly: farmers, teachers, ranch hands, pharmacists, oil rig workers. Hardy, smalltown folk. Some were Democrats, but a lot of them—maybe even most of them—were Republicans. Party of Lincoln.

And my grandparents explained that folks in these parts, they didn't like showoffs. They didn't admire braggarts or bullies. They didn't respect mean-spiritedness or folks who were always looking for shortcuts in life. Instead, what they valued were traits like honesty and hard work, kindness, courtesy, humility, responsibility, helping each other out. That's

what they believed in. True things. Things that last. The things we try to teach our kids.

And what my grandparents understood was that these values weren't limited to Kansas. They weren't limited to small towns. These values could travel to Hawaii. They could travel even to the other side of the world, where my mother would end up working to help poor women get a better life, trying to apply those values. My grandparents knew these values weren't reserved for one race. They could be passed down to a half-Kenyan grandson or a half-Asian granddaughter. In fact, they were the same values Michelle's parents, the descendants of slaves, taught their own kids, living in a bungalow on the South Side of Chicago. They knew these values were exactly what drew immigrants here, and they believed that the children of those immigrants were just as American as their own, whether they wore a cowboy hat or a yarmulke, a baseball cap or a hijab.

America has changed over the years. But these values that my grandparents taught me, they haven't gone anywhere. They're as strong as ever, still cherished by people of every party, every race, every faith. They live on in each of us. What makes us American, what makes us patriots is what's in here. That's what matters.

And that's why we can take the food and music and holidays and styles of other countries and blend it into something uniquely our own. That's why we can attract strivers and entrepreneurs from around the globe to build new factories and create new industries here. That's why our military can look the way it does: every shade of humanity, forged into common service. That's why anyone who threatens our values, whether Fascists or Communists or jihadists or homegrown demagogues, will always fail in the end.

That is America. That is America. Those bonds of affection, that common creed. We don't fear the future, we shape it. We embrace it, as one people, stronger together than we are on our own. That's what Hillary Clinton understands, this fighter, this stateswoman, this mother and grandmother, this public servant, this patriot. That's the America she's fighting for.

And that is why I have confidence, as I leave this stage tonight, that the Democratic Party is in good hands. My time in this office, it hasn't fixed everything. As much as we've done, there's still so much I want to do. But for all the tough lessons I've had to learn, for all the places where I've fallen short, I've told Hillary, and I'll tell you, what's picked me back up every single time: It's been you, the American people.

It's the letter I keep on my wall from a survivor in Ohio who twice almost lost everything to cancer, but urged me to keep fighting for health care reform, even when the battle seemed lost. Do not quit.

It's the painting I keep in my private office, a big-eyed, green owl with blue wings, made by a 7-year-old girl who was taken from us in Newtown, given to me by her parents so I wouldn't forget, a reminder of all the parents who have turned their grief into action.

It's the small-business owner in Colorado who cut most of his own salary so he wouldn't have to lay off any of his workers in the recession, because, he said, "that wouldn't have been in the spirit of America."

It's the conservative in Texas who said he disagreed with me on everything, but he appreciated that, like him, I try to be a good dad.

It's the courage of the young soldier from Arizona who nearly died on the battlefield in Afghanistan, but who has learned to speak again and walk again, and earlier this year, stepped through the door of the Oval Office on his own power to salute and shake my hand.

It is every American who believed we could change this country for the better, so many of you who'd never been involved in politics, who picked up phones and hit the streets and used the Internet in amazing new ways that I didn't really understand, but made change happen. You are the best organizers on the planet, and I am so proud of all the change that you made possible.

Time and again, you've picked me up. And I hope sometimes I picked you up too. And tonight I ask you to do for Hillary Clinton what

you did for me. I ask you to carry her the same way you carried me. Because you're who I was talking about 12 years ago when I talked about hope. It's been you who fueled my dogged faith in our future, even when the odds were great, even when the road is long. Hope in the face of difficulty. Hope in the face of uncertainty. The audacity of hope.

America, you've vindicated that hope these past 8 years. And now I'm ready to pass the baton and do my part as a private citizen. So this year, in this election, I'm asking you to join me, to reject cynicism and reject fear, and to summon what is best in us to elect Hillary Clinton as the next President of the United States and show the world we still believe in the promise of this great Nation.

Thank you for this incredible journey. Let's keep it going. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:57 p.m. at the Wells Fargo Center. In his remarks, he referred to former President William J. Clinton, husband of Democratic Presidential candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton; Anne Holton, wife of Democratic Vice Presidential nominee Sen. Timothy M. Kaine, and their children Woody, Nat, and Annella; Republican Presidential nominee Donald J. Trump; President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; Sen. Bernard Sanders, in his former capacity as a Democratic Presidential candidate; Medina, OH, resident and health care reform advocate Natoma A. Canfield; Christopher and Lynn McDonnell, parents of Grace A. McDonnell, who was killed in the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, CT, on December 14, 2012; Sfc. Cory Remsburg, USA; and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. He also referred to his sister Maya Soetoro-Ng, mother-in-law Marian Robinson, and brother-in-law Craig M. Robinson.

Remarks to the Disabled American Veterans National Convention in Atlanta, Georgia

August 1, 2016

The President. Thank you, DAV! Thank you so much. Thank you. Please, everybody, have a seat. What an honor to be with you today. Thank you. And thanks to Bobby. I'll never forget the time Bobby came to the Oval Office carrying a baseball bat. [*Laughter*] Secret Service got a little nervous. [*Laughter*] But it was a genuine Louisville Slugger, a thank-you for going to bat for our veterans. And I want to thank Bobby for your devotion to our veterans, especially your fellow Vietnam vets. Thank you. Give Bobby a big round of applause.

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you back. I do!

I want to thank our outstanding leadership team for welcoming me today, including National Commander Moses McIntosh, Senior Vice Commander Dave Riley, National Adjutant Marc Burgess, Executive Director Barry Jesinoski. Your voice in Washington, Garry Augustine. And don't forget Pat Kemper and all the spouses and families of the DAV Auxiliary. Thank you.

I also want to acknowledge Mayor Kasim Reed and County Chairman John Eaves for welcoming us to the great State of Georgia and the beautiful city of Atlanta. I am pleased to be joined by our tireless Secretary of the VA, Bob McDonald. I know he spoke to you yesterday. He is working hard—hard—every single day to transform the VA to serve our veterans better. He still gives out his cell phone number and his e-mail. Not many people know this, but so far, he's received more than 45,000 calls, e-mails, and texts. [*Laughter*] And I don't know what his phone bill is looking like. [*Laughter*] I hope he has a good plan. [*Laughter*] But Bob and his team work to deal with each one of those texts or e-mails or phone calls he receives because every single veteran matters. And he knows that. So thank you, Bob, for the great work you're doing.

So it's good to be back with the Disabled American Veterans. And what a journey that we've had together.

Audience member. We're glad to have you!

The President. It's great to be here.

We worked together back when I was a Senator. You were one of the first veterans' organizations I called when I ran for President. I welcomed you to the White House as a partner. I came to your convention in my first term, and my second, along with Michelle. And so it is fitting that my final major address to our Nation's veterans as President is here at the DAV.

And as I reflect on these past 8 years, some of the most unforgettable experiences that I've had have been moments I've spent with you—Americans, veterans, and your families. We stood together at Arlington to honor Corporal Frank Buckles, 110 years old, our last veteran from the First World War, as he was laid to rest. I ordered our flags to be flown at halfstaff because, even after a hundred years, we will never stop saluting those who served in our name.

We stood together at Normandy to thank an entire generation—among them, my grandfather, who was in Patton's army—a generation that literally saved the world. There was Harry Kulkowitz, who returned to the beaches he helped liberate and, told he could have anything he wanted, said with the humility of a soldier, a hamburger will do just fine. [*Laughter*] I think of Luta McGrath. This past Veterans Day, just before her 108th birthday, then the oldest known female veteran of World War II, which was a reminder that women have always served to keep America strong and free.

We've stood together at the memorial to our Korean war veterans and recalled how a soldier, marching through the snow, had a tiny pair of baby booties hanging from his rifle—a reminder of his unborn child—a story that had been lost to history. But we tracked him down. We found him. And we shared the story of Korean war veteran Dick Shank, who made it home to that baby boy and lived out his life—at 84 years old, he was still roller skating—[*laughter*]—because no war should ever be forgotten and no veteran should ever be overlooked.

We've stood together at the wall and remembered the lessons of Vietnam: that even when Americans may disagree about a war, we have to stand united in support of our troops; and that for mothers like Sarah Shay, who honored her missing son for more than 40 years, we will never stop working to bring home our prisoners of war and our missing in action. We leave nobody behind. No one.

And we've come together to welcome our newest veterans into your ranks, from Desert Storm, the Balkans, Afghanistan, and Iraq—our proud 9/11 generation. This is a time of transition. When I came into office, we had nearly 180,000 American troops in Afghanistan and Iraq. Today, that number is less than 15,000. Most of our troops have come home.

To all of you who served in Afghanistan, you can take enormous pride in the progress you helped achieve: driving Al Qaida out of its camps, toppling the Taliban, delivering justice to Usama bin Laden, helping Afghans improve their lives. There are millions of boys and girls in school, and democratic elections and a democratic government. Training Afghan forces to take responsibility for their own security, so that we are no longer engaged in a major ground war in Afghanistan. That is your legacy. And today we salute our forces serving there on a more limited mission—supporting Afghan forces, going after terrorists—because we must never allow Afghanistan to be used as a safe haven for terrorists to attack our Nation again.

To all of you who served in Iraq, we saw your heroism in pushing out a dictator whose brutality must be condemned, never praised; in defeating an insurgency; in giving the Iraqi people a chance. And no matter what has happened since, your valor in the deserts, in fierce urban combat, will be honored in the annals of military history.

Let me say something else about this generation. As Commander in Chief, I'm pretty tired of some folks trash-talking America's military and troops. Our military is somewhat smaller. After two major ground wars come to a close, that's natural. And we're going to keep doing

everything we need to do to improve readiness and modernize our forces. But let's get some facts straight. America's Army is the best trained, best equipped land force on the planet. Our Navy is the largest and most lethal in the world. The precision of, and reach of, our Air Force is unmatched. Our Marines are the world's only truly expeditionary force. We have the world's finest Coast Guard. We have the most capable fighting force in history, and we're going to keep it that way.

And no ally or adversary should ever doubt our strength and our resolve. And we will keep pounding ISIL and taking out their leaders and pushing them back on the ground. And united with a global coalition, we will destroy this barbaric terrorist group. They will be destroyed.

In the face of Russian aggression, we're not going to turn our back to our allies in Europe. We're going to stay united in NATO, which is the world's strongest alliance. From the Asia-Pacific to Africa to the Americas, the United States and our Armed Forces will remain the greatest force for freedom and security and peace that the world has ever known. That is your legacy. That is what we have to protect, and that is what we have to defend.

And let me say this: No one—no one—has given more for our freedom and our security than our Gold Star families. Michelle and I have spent countless hours with them. We have grieved with them. There's a reason why, last week in Philadelphia, I was humbled to be introduced by Sharon Belkofer from Ohio, a Gold Star mom whose son Tom, a lieutenant colonel in the Army, gave his life in Afghanistan. I requested Sharon to introduce me, because I understood that our Gold Star families have made a sacrifice that most of us cannot even begin to imagine. They represent the very best of our country. They continue to inspire us every day, every moment. They serve as a powerful reminder of the true strength of America. And we have to do everything we can for those families, and honor them, and be humbled by them.

DAV, I know that your service has also been defined by another battle. This is a group that understands sacrifice. You've been defined by the battle here at home to persevere through wounds and disabilities. I think of a veteran from Iraq who lost her arm, but who said she decided to focus "not on what I had lost, but on what I still had." I see that same spirit in you. Maybe it was there in the hospital bed, fighting for your life, you learned what it really means to have faith. Maybe it was during rehab, learning without—how to live without a leg—or both—you learned what it really means to persevere.

About a month ago, I went to Walter Reed—I do this periodically—and was in the rehab unit watching some of these folks work out. And I decided—you might have seen this—I was doing some pushups with them and—[*laughter*]—trying to keep up with them. And I was sweating and getting all tired. [*Laughter*] They took it easy on me. [*Laughter*] But it gave me a sense of—just a small sense of what perseverance really means.

Maybe it was during the night when the memories came rushing back, and you summoned the courage to reach out and get help and stay strong. And I was proud to help recognize your patriotism and resilience in the heart of our Nation's Capital when we dedicated the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial.

This organization shows us, shows this Nation, what it means to be strong. But as strong as you are—and nobody is stronger than our disabled vets—I know you didn't make this journey alone. You're here because of the love and support of your families and your caregivers and your neighbors and your communities and your fellow veterans. They were the shoulder you leaned on, who carried you when you couldn't walk, who picked you up when you stumbled, who celebrated your victories with you, who sometimes just made you laugh and reminded you how good life can be.

And that brings me to what I want to talk about here today. For more than two centuries, this country that we love hasn't just endured; we have thrived. We have overcome challenges that would have broken a lesser nation. And not thanks to any one person or one group of people, but because, like you learned in the military, we're all one team.

We believe in taking care of each other and in lifting each other up and leaving no one behind——

Audience member. That's right!

The President. ——and in meeting the collective responsibilities that we can only meet together: the security of our Nation; the education of our children; dignity for our seniors; equal rights for all of our citizens; health care, which is now a right for everybody; and the care and well-being of our veterans and your families. That is a responsibility for all of us, not just a few. We all have to do our part.

And as I've said before, America's commitment to our veterans is not just lines in a budget. And it can't be about politics. It's not even really about policy. Our commitment to our veterans is a sacred covenant. And I don't use those words lightly. It is sacred because there is no more solemn request than to ask someone to risk their life, to be ready to give their life on our behalf. It's a covenant because both sides have responsibilities. Those who put on the uniform, you took an oath to protect and defend us. While the rest of us, the citizens you kept safe, we pledged to take care of you and your families when you come home. That's a sacred covenant. That's a solemn promise that we make to each other. And it is binding. And upholding it is a moral imperative.

And at times, our Nation has not always upheld this covenant. Our Vietnam vets, they sure know this.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. When you came home, you deserved better. Veterans who at times have struggled to get care at the VA, you deserve better too. If there's ever a breach in the covenant, then leaders in this country have to work hard to regain trust.

That's what Bob and so many hard-working people at the VA are doing. But upholding this covenant has to be the work of all of us. It's not just the VA's job. It's everybody's job. Government has to deliver the care and benefits and support that you have earned. Veterans service organizations have to hold us accountable and be our partners, like the 1.3 million members of the DAV are doing every day. And citizens have to step up too, which is why Michelle and Dr. Jill Biden, through Joining Forces, have rallied the American people to honor and support our military families and our veterans.

Now, we've got a lot more work to do. But working together over these past 8 years, we've delivered real progress for our veterans. And we can't let up. It's not a reason for complacency, but we should understand that when we really put our sweat and tears and put our shoulder to the wheel, we can make things better.

About 200,000 servicemembers are becoming veterans every single year. And America is going to have to be there for you for a lifetime in five important ways.

Number one, we have to keep fighting for the resources you need. Now, since I took office, we've made historic increases in veterans funding, the biggest boost in decades. That's a fact. And I've proposed another increase for next year. So, all together, during my Presidency, we will have increased funding for veterans by more than 85 percent.

With advance appropriations, we're protecting veterans' health care from the annual Washington budget battles. But I do have to point this out: Republicans in Congress have proposed cutting my VA budget. And when they return in the fall, they should pass the budget our veterans need and fund it fully. Don't just talk about standing with veterans. Don't just talk about me. [*Laughter*] Do something to support our veterans. That's what you need to do.

Number two, we've got to keep fighting to deliver the health care you've been promised. Today, more of our Vietnam vets are getting your disability benefits because of your exposure to agent orange. That's a change that we made. So, too, for our Desert Storm veterans, because the illnesses tied to the Gulf war. Those are changes we made. All together, we've made VA benefits available to more than 2 million veterans who didn't have them before.

Sometimes—[*applause*]. Let's face it, sometimes folks don't know that, but it's a fact. And I have to say, thanks to the Affordable Care Act——

Audience member. Thank you!

The President. ——Obamacare—veterans not covered by the VA now have access to quality, affordable health care. And insurance companies can't discriminate against you because of preexisting conditions like posttraumatic stress. And more veterans are gaining access to health insurance.

So we need to keep making it easier to access care. That's why we recruited some of the best talent from Silicon Valley and the private sector. And in one of their very first innovations, veterans can now finally apply for VA health care anytime, anywhere, from any device, including your smartphone—simple, easy, in as little as 20 minutes. Just go to vets.gov. The days of having to wait in line at a VA office or mailing it in—those days are over. We're finally moving into the 21st century when it comes to helping our veterans. It's about time.

We're reaching more veterans, including rural veterans, with telemedicine, so you can see someone at the VA without leaving your home. We now have a designated women's health provider at all VA clinics to make sure our women's veterans get the tailored care and the dignity and the respect that you deserve.

And for our disabled vets, we have increased funds for prosthetics, eliminated copays if you're catastrophically disabled, made progress on concurrent receipt so more severely disabled retirees can now receive your military retired pay and your VA disability benefits. And we're doing more than ever to make sure your devoted families and caregivers get the skills and support they need to stay strong as well.

And here, I want to thank veterans across our country for being part of another mission: our Precision Medicine Initiative to revolutionize health care with treatments that are tailored for each patient. As of today, more than 500,000 veterans—maybe some of you—have stepped forward and donated your health and genetic data for research, which brings us halfway to our goal of 1 million veterans that are doing so.

And what this does is it gives us a better understanding of genetics, which will allow us to improve treatments for things like traumatic brain injury and posttraumatic stress and diabetes and cancer. And that won't just help veterans. It will help all Americans. And it's just one more example of how our veterans keep serving our country even after they've come home.

We need to keep improving mental health care. I'll never forget the soldiers I met at Fort Bliss. They were proud of their service, but they were struggling with issues like posttraumatic stress. So, for veterans with PTS, we made it easier for you to qualify for the VA care that you need, no matter when you served. We've increased funding for veterans' mental health care by more than 75 percent—billions more dollars. More awareness and outreach, because we have to end any shame or stigma that comes with going and getting help.

We've put in place more clinicians, more counselors, more peer support—veterans helping veterans. More research: $100 million for new approaches to PTS and TBI. And today, we're delivering more mental health care to more veterans than ever. We are saving lives.

But when too many veterans still aren't getting the care that they need, we all have to be outraged. We all have to do better. And when 20 veterans a day are taking their own lives, that is a national tragedy. We all have to do better. Most of those 20 vets taking their lives each day are not in the VA. But we know that when vets do get VA care, they're more likely to survive. So we need to get more vets connected to the VA. And when you have an urgent need for mental health care, you shouldn't have to wait days, you shouldn't have to wait weeks. You should get those services the very same day.

And Congress can help by providing the funding and flexibility we need to hire highly qualified mental health professionals. And medical schools can help us recruit and train more psychiatrists. And every American, military and civilian, can help as well, by learning those five signs that somebody is hurting, so we can reach out and help our veterans stay strong. We're one team, one American family.

When any member of our family is suffering, we've got to be there for each other.

Now, we also need to keep fixing the problems that came to light: long wait times, veterans denied care, people manipulating the books—inexcusable. I know Bob gave you an update, but I want to repeat: We've hired thousands more doctors, nurses, staff; opened more clinical space. And, with the Choice Program, we're helping more veterans get care outside of the VA. It all adds up to millions more appointments, delivering more benefits to more veterans than ever before. That is progress.

But even as we improve access, more veterans than ever are seeking care. So we're putting more and more resources in, but you've got more and more demand for care at the same time. And this surge in demand means there are now more veterans waiting for appointments, even though we've done a lot more. So I know I'm not satisfied. Bob is still not satisfied. And we will not let up. Bob and his new leadership team are going to keep pushing to transform the VA, and he will keep holding people accountable. This is somebody who cares deeply about our veterans getting what they deserve and what they have earned.

And when whistleblowers expose misconduct, they will need to be protected, not punished. We need Congress to make it easier for the VA to help veterans get care in your communities.

But I have to say—here's one thing I want to be very clear about—here's one thing we will not do: We cannot outsource and privatize health care for America's veterans. There are folks who keep pushing this. They don't always come out and say the word "privatize," but that—you read what they say, that's what they mean. And these radical proposals would begin to dismantle the VA health care system that millions of veterans depend on every day. And that would hurt veterans.

Study after study shows that in many areas, like mental health, the quality of care at the VA is often better than in private care. So let's listen to our veterans, who are telling us: Don't destroy VA health care. Fix it and make it work, but don't break our covenant with our veterans.

This brings me to the third area where we have to stay focused. We have to keep cutting the disability claims backlog. Now, from its peak, we've slashed that backlog by nearly 90 percent. My Chief of Staff and I—there were—there was a chunk of time when that backlog was high where, every day, no matter what else was happening around the world, he and I, we'd take these walks around the South Lawn just to keep our exercise, keep our steps up. And every day, we talked about, how are we going to get that backlog down. And each week, we'd look and see what kind of progress we're making. That's how we reduced it by 90 percent.

The backlog is now lower than when I came into office, even though there are a lot more people who are eligible for claims. And claims decisions are more accurate the first time.

And on both these fronts, we're keeping at it. But as we all know, when veterans appeal a decision, you're put into an appeals system that right now is broken. And you shouldn't have to fight for years to get a straight answer. Now, we've proposed major reforms, and I want to thank the DAV and all the other veterans' groups for raising your voice on this. We've got to keep up the pressure. Congress needs to pass comprehensive reform of the claims appeals process, because if we don't fix the appeals process, even when we get the backlog down on the original claim, too many folks are waiting on the back end. We've got to fix it. And we can. But we're going to have to push Congress. And I don't know if you've noticed, that's hard. [*Laughter*]

Fourth, we've got to keep fighting for the dignity of every veteran. And that includes ending the tragedy, the travesty of veterans' homelessness. Now, this is something that, within my administration, we've said this is all hands on deck, across government. Everybody has got to be involved in this. And with Joining Forces, Michelle and Jill have helped galvanize hundreds of mayors and communities across the country. Two States, Virginia and Connecticut, as well as 27 cities and towns across the

country have effectively ended veterans' homelessness.

So today I can announce that, nationally, we have now reduced the number of homeless veterans by 47 percent—nearly half. We have just about cut veterans' homelessness in half. We've helped bring tens of thousands of veterans off the streets. But we're not slowing down. We're going to keep up the momentum. This fall, Michelle will bring our partners from across the country together at the White House to share best practices to figure out what has worked, what hasn't worked. Because we will not stop until every veteran who fought for America has a home in America. This is something we've got to get done.

And finally, we've got to keep fighting to give our troops and veterans and your families every opportunity to live the American Dream that you helped defend. With our overhaul of the transition assistance program, hundreds of thousands of departing servicemembers and their spouses have received training to plan their next career and find a job or start a business. We expanded the post-9/11 GI bill to reservists and National Guard members and families, including Gold Star spouses and children. And then we expanded it to vocational training and apprenticeships.

We've empowered veterans with new tools to find the schools that are right for you or to get the support you need to succeed on campus, to make sure you don't get ripped off, to cap your student loans, to make sure you and your families get instate tuition, which is true now in all 50 States. And so far, we have helped more than 1.6 million veterans and their families realize their dream of an education, an investment in you and America that will keep us strong and keep paying off for generations to come.

So we're doing more to help you find jobs worthy of your incredible talents. Because if you could lead a team and run logistics and manage a budget or save a life in a war zone, you sure as heck can do it right back here at home.

I called for States to recognize the training and skills of veterans when issuing credentials for civilian jobs, licensing. Now all 50 States do it. Before, less than half the States made it easy for military spouses to get credentials and licenses. Today, all 50 States do it. Starting this fall, we'll close loopholes to protect our troops and military families from predatory payday lenders.

So today, all across America, more veterans are at work, on the job, beginning the next chapter of your service to our country. Veterans who are physicians and nurses have been hired by community health centers. Cities and towns are hiring veterans as teachers and police officers, firefighters and first responders. Because we made it a priority in the Federal Government, hiring hundreds of thousands of veterans, including disabled veterans, nearly one in three Federal workers is now a veteran.

I challenged America's companies to hire veterans. And then, in case they weren't listening to me, I've sicced Jill and Michelle on them—[*laughter*]—through Joining Forces, and companies now have hired or trained more than 1.2 million veterans and military spouses. So, all told, we've cut veterans' unemployment by more than half, down to 4.2 percent, which is actually lower than the already low national average. And it's way down for post-9/11 veterans too. It's one of the reasons we've been able to help more than 3.6 million veterans buy or refinance a home of their own.

So I'm going to keep saying to every company in America, if you want talent, if you want dedication, if you want to get the job done, then hire a vet! Hire a military spouse! They know how to get the job done. They don't fool around!

So, DAV, we've made a lot of progress. It's not always focused on, because, understandably, the news a lot of the time focuses on what's still not working. That's okay. That keeps us on our toes, keeps us working. But every once in a while, it's good to remember the progress we've made, because that tells us when we focus on it, we can do right by our veterans. And as this new generation of veterans joins your ranks, we've got to keep on stepping up our game, giving veterans the resources you need, transforming the VA, delivering

the health care you've earned, reducing the backlog, reforming appeals, standing up for your dignity, and helping you share in the American Dream.

And I know we can, because over the past 8 years, I've seen the spirit of America, and I have seen time and time and time again the strength of our veterans, the unbreakable will of our disabled vets. You teach us better than anybody that we may take a hit sometimes, we may get knocked down, but we get back up. We carry on. And when we take care of each other and uphold that sacred covenant, there is nothing we cannot do.

Like that soldier I've told you before, Army Ranger veteran Cory Remsburg, nearly killed in Afghanistan, who learned to talk again and walk again, and who recently stood up and walked into the Oval Office and shook my hand. We all have to keep on rising.

Like Medal of Honor recipient Staff Sergeant Ty Carter, who struggled with posttraumatic stress, and who's now helping others stay strong. Troops, veterans, civilians—we all have to keep on healing.

Like the wounded warriors and disabled vets who are out there running and jumping and swimming and biking and climbing, including Marine Corps veteran Charlie Linville, who just became the first combat amputee to reach the top of Mount Everest. We all have to keep on striving.

Like the veterans taking care of each other, including here at the DAV: Army veteran Oscar Olguin; Navy Reserve veteran Charity Edgar; Marine Corps veteran Carmen McGinnis, who says helping veterans "gives me a sense of purpose." That's something we all have to recognize. We all have to keep on serving.

Like Air Force Technical Sergeant Jason Miller, who considered taking his own life, but who wrote me a letter, and after I put him in touch with Team Rubicon, went to work rebuilding communities after disasters, found a new purpose in life. Well, we all have to keep building this country we love.

And like the ranks of our military and our veterans—whether they are Black or White or Latino or Asian or Native American, or they are young or old, whether they are gay or straight, whatever their faith, men, women, Americans with disabilities—we have to keep on uniting as one team, as one people, as one Nation.

That's what you have taught us. That's what you are an example of. The Disabled Veterans of America knows what it means to be one team. We draw inspiration from you. I am grateful for everything that you have done for this country. I am grateful for having had the opportunity to work with you.

God bless you. Thank you for your service. Thank you for your sacrifice. Thank you for your patriotism. We honor and appreciate you. God bless our veterans, and God bless the United States of America.

Thank you very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:39 p.m. in the Centennial Ballroom at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Robert Barrera, former national commander, Disabled American Veterans, who introduced the President; Garry J. Augustine, executive director of the Washington headquarters, Pat Kemper, auxiliary adjutant, Oscar Olguin, national service supervisor, Charity Edgar, assistant national director of communications, and Carmen McGinnis, national service officer, Disabled American Veterans; Chairman John H. Eaves of Fulton County, GA; Dawn Halfaker, president and chief executive officer, Halfaker & Associates, LLC, who was wounded while serving as an Army Military Police officer in Iraq in 2004; and Jill T. Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Remarks at a Welcoming Ceremony for Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore

August 2, 2016

President Obama. Good morning, everybody.

Audience members. Good morning!

President Obama. Today we welcome our friends from Singapore. We have a little——

Audience members. Woo!

The President. ——we have some Singapore weather. [*Laughter*] So you can appreciate that. Singapore is one nation, with four official languages. So let me just say good morning. *Selamat datang. Vanakkam.* And *ni hao.* On behalf of Michelle and myself, on behalf of the American people, I am honored to welcome Prime Minister Lee and Mrs. Lee to the United States.

This marks the first official state visit by a Singaporean Prime Minister in over 30 years. It celebrates the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between our two nations. And it is a reflection of my friendship and partnership with Prime Minister Lee over the past 8 years. It's an opportunity for me to repay the hospitality that the Prime Minister and the people of Singapore showed me when I visited Singapore during my first year in office. We were there for the APEC summit, with its tradition of dressing in shirts that are somewhat colorful—[*laughter*]—a tradition that we will reserve only for those summits and we are not duplicating today. [*Laughter*]

A half a century ago, when Singapore was an island of rural villages and crowded tenements, few would have imagined a day like today. But Singaporeans pride themselves on being the "little red dot"—the little red dot on many maps, but with a very big impact on the world. In less than a generation, under the vision and stewardship of Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, Singaporeans transformed their nation from Third World to First. They did this with almost no natural resources, except one: the people of Singapore and their commitment to education and to progress and to innovation.

Our Singaporean friends say that "a long road reveals the strength of your horse; a long time reveals the heart of your friends." I first saw the heart of the people of Singapore as a young boy, during my years living in Southeast Asia. We see it now in the proud Singaporean Americans who enrich our Nation and who join us today, including a lot of "uncles" and "aunties." [*Laughter*] We see it in all the Singaporean officers who attend [American]* military academies, more than the rest of Asia combined.

We see our friendship in the collaborations between our innovators and entrepreneurs, from Silicon Valley to Singapore's Block 71. In fact, I understand that the Prime Minister himself recently wrote a program to solve sudoku puzzles—which Michelle will want. [*Laughter*] Then the Foreign Minister stepped in and translated that program into JavaScript. So I've got to start asking John Kerry to do that. [*Laughter*]

Today our friendship and shared interests bring us together in common pursuit of a common vision: a peaceful and prosperous Asia-Pacific and a more secure world. As the United States has rebalanced our foreign policy to the Asia-Pacific, Singapore—and Prime Minister Lee, in particular—have been solid-rock partners. Singapore is an anchor of our presence in the region. We stand together for a regional order where every nation, large and small, plays and trades by the same rules. And we stand together to meet the threats of the 21st century, from terrorism to the spread of disease to climate change.

In this work, we draw strength from our people, two societies built on multiculturalism and on merit. In the United States, we call ourselves a "melting pot" of different races, religions, and creeds. In Singapore, it is *rojak*—different parts united in a harmonious whole. We're bound by the belief that no matter who

* White House correction.

you are, if you work hard and play by the rules, you can make it. What Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew once said of his country could be said of us: Both are populations of triers, "prepared to try anything to improve themselves. [We] have only the future to go in quest of."

Prime Minister Lee, Mrs. Lee: With our eyes focused on the future and united in our quest for the progress and security of our two peoples, we welcome you to the United States of America.

Prime Minister Lee. Thank you.

President Barack Obama and Mrs. Michelle Obama; distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen; and Americans and Singaporeans who are here today: Thank you very much for this very kind invitation. I know it's a busy year. I watched you on television last week, and Michelle too. And it's an honor for Singapore to be received with such a warm welcome, especially as we celebrate 50 years of our diplomatic relations.

The first official visit by a Singapore Prime Minister to the United States was in 1967. President Lyndon Johnson received Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, our founding Prime Minister.

Singapore was then newly independent. We were struggling to build a modern economy with no means to defend ourselves in a turbulent Southeast Asia. But Mr. Lee did not come to seek military or economic aid. At the time, America was divided over the Vietnam War. He came to take the measure of America's moods and intentions. He explained to his American friends why Asia mattered to America, and why the United States' active engagement was important to millions of people living in Southeast Asia. America's presence helped to contain the spread of communism and gave noncommunist Southeast Asian countries the crucial security, time, and space to consolidate and to prosper.

Almost 50 years later, the world has completely changed. The cold war is long over, and the threat of communism has disappeared. Asia is at peace, though tensions are not entirely absent. Southeast Asia has prospered, with countries cooperating peacefully as members of ASEAN.

America's endurance, policies, and actions have contributed greatly to this current peace and prosperity. Keeping your markets open to trade, deepening your partnership with ASEAN, and cooperating with countries in the region to enhance regional security, you have helped create the basis for a peaceful, rules-based regional and international order.

President Obama, the U.S. rebalance to Asia is an important affirmation of a longstanding policy of the United States and has been warmly welcomed by all ASEAN countries. Your efforts to build a constructive relationship with China will set the strategic backdrop for the whole region and beyond. You have personally pushed for the Trans-Pacific Partnership, growing a small FTA that Singapore started, together with Chile, Brunei, and New Zealand, into what will be a major trading group linking both sides of the Pacific.

I know that America has many preoccupations both at home and abroad. Some Americans are anxious and frustrated with economic uncertainty and the uneven results of globalization, trade, and foreign engagement. But the U.S. has many interests, investments, and friends in the region. These strengthen the United States.

Singapore fervently hopes that the U.S. will stay engaged and maintain its indispensable role in the Asia-Pacific. In particular, we hope—and I'm sure the President shares this hope—that Congress will ratify the TPP soon. Not only will the TPP benefit American workers and businesses, it will send a clear signal, and a vital signal, that America will continue to lead in the Asia-Pacific and enhance the partnerships that link our destinies together.

Singapore's own ties with the United States have remained steadfast through nine U.S. Presidents—five Republican and four Democratic—and three Singapore Prime Ministers. We will maintain these bipartisan links with whichever party wins the elections in November. We will continue to build and to deepen our economic and security relationships. We are partners in tackling the scourge of ISIS and other forms of violent extremism. Our armed

forces take part in exercises together and interact regularly.

On this visit, President Obama and I will discuss expanding our already extensive cooperation to new areas, including cybersecurity and smart cities. But our ties reach beyond the government offices and corporate boardrooms to the hearts and minds of our people.

Thousands of Singapore students and people study and work in America, and thousands of U.S. companies operate out of Singapore. The largest American curriculum school outside the U.S. in the world is in Singapore and is a Singapore-American school.

Audience members. Woo!

Prime Minister Lee. And there are some alumni here, obviously. [*Laughter*]

In my many visits to America, I meet Singaporeans living in many different States, contributing in their own ways to their host country and their respective communities. And I also meet Americans who have been to Singapore and tell me about their Singaporean friends and their favorite hawker food. And I think many of them have met *rojak* too.

So I'm very grateful for this opportunity to renew our partnership on this 50th anniversary milestone. And I look forward to having many more occasions and reasons to celebrate this special relationship together.

Thank you, President Obama.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:26 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, where Prime Minister Lee was accorded a formal welcome with full military honors. In his remarks, he referred to Ho Ching, wife of Prime Minister Lee; and Minister of Foreign Affairs Vivian Balakrishnan of Singapore. Prime Minister Lee referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization, also known as ISIS.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore

August 2, 2016

President Obama. Hello, everyone. Please have a seat. Once again, I'm honored to welcome my good friend, Prime Minister Lee and his delegation back to the White House. I have been fortunate to work with the Prime Minister throughout my Presidency, and I always value his insight, his counsel, and his outstanding partnership.

Let me say that our thoughts today are also with former President Nathan, and we join the people of Singapore in praying for his full and speedy recovery.

As President, I've rebalanced American foreign policy so that we're playing a larger and long-term role in the Asia-Pacific, a region that is critical to our security and our prosperity. And as I said this morning, Singapore has played a vital role in that rebalance. With Singapore's support, the United States is engaging more deeply than ever across the region, including through ASEAN and the East Asia Summit. Given its strategic location, Singapore is an anchor for the U.S. presence in the region, which is the foundation of stability and peace. And, Mr. Prime Minister, I want to thank you for the invaluable contributions that Singapore has made to a central pillar of our foreign policy.

Today we agreed to continue building on this progress. The U.S. and Singapore are united in our commitment to advancing regional security and stability. Our defense relationship remains one of the closest in Southeast Asia, with hundreds of American ships and aircraft rotating through Singapore each year. As I told the Prime Minister, we welcome Singapore's interest in purchasing the F–35 aircraft, and we'll also explore the possibility of Singaporean troops training on Guam.

At the same time, we'll continue working to strengthen regional institutions like ASEAN, in line with the principles we agreed to at Sunnylands earlier this year. And we reaffirmed our shared commitment to building a regional or-

der where all nations play by the same rules and disputes are resolved peacefully, including in the South China Sea.

We agreed to do more to encourage economic growth and innovation among our economies. With a little over a decade, trade between our two countries has grown more than 50 percent. We're collaborating to jumpstart greater digital innovation, including research and development into technology and data to prove and promote Smart Cities concepts that can improve the daily lives of our citizens. We'll do more to connect our vibrant startup communities so that an engineer in Singapore can collaborate more easily with an entrepreneur in Silicon Valley or Austin, Texas.

With respect to trade, this is an issue that stirs great passion. Globalization means economies around the world are more integrated than ever and jobs and capital move across borders. Automation means that goods and products can be produced with fewer workers. And these forces of globalization and technology have not always benefited everybody evenly. There are fears and anxieties that people may be left behind. And these anxieties are legitimate. They can't be ignored. They have to be taken seriously. As I've said before, it means that we have to do everything we can to make sure that everybody shares in prosperity, that we have strong rules to protect workers, to promote high wages, to make sure that our citizens are getting the education and the training that they need.

But the answer cannot be to back away from trade and the global economy. It is here to stay. It's not possible to cut ourselves off given how integrated our economies are. And trying to pull up a drawbridge on trade would only hurt us and hurt our workers. So the answer is to make sure that globalization and trade is working for us, not against us.

And that's why, today, we are reaffirming our commitment to the Trans-Pacific Partnership. I'm a strong supporter of TPP because it will reduce tariffs—taxes, basically—on American goods from cars to crops and make it easier for Americans to export into the fastest growing markets of the world. TPP levels the playing field for our workers and helps to ensure countries abide by strong labor and environmental rules.

So this is an opportunity to grow our economies and write the rules for trade in the 21st century in a way that's equitable. It gives us a chance to advance American leadership, reduce economic inequality, and support good-paying jobs, all while strengthening critical strategic relationships in a vital region.

So I think not only is TPP important, but the Prime Minister and I agreed that we need to extend our partnership beyond just regional efforts. We have work to do on a global scale. Singapore was the first country in Southeast Asia to join the global coalition to destroy ISIL, and we're grateful that Singapore is making new contributions to this effort by providing valuable medical support to coalition forces.

As two nations on the forefront of digital innovation, we recognize the growing threats of cyber attacks, and we're going to continue to work to strengthen cybersecurity and to promote peaceful norms on how nations should operate in cyberspace.

Singapore, the Garden City, helped to achieve the Paris climate agreement last year. And, Mr. Prime Minister, thank you for your commitment to work towards joining the Paris Agreement this year. We're also working closely with the international community to reduce harmful aviation emissions and phase down HFCs. And our two countries will continue to work together to advance global health security so that the world is better prepared to address the threat of pandemics.

Last point: We agreed to keep promoting people-to-people ties between our two countries. We're expanding our trusted travelers program to make it easier for Americans and Singaporeans to visit each other and do business together. I welcome Singapore's announcement of a new exchange program, which will include scholarships for students of our two countries. And through our Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative, we're going to keep empowering young people in Singapore and across the region to become the

leaders of tomorrow in their own communities, in business, and in civil society.

I'll note that I had a chance to meet one of those young Singaporean leaders at a YSEALI summit in Kuala Lumpur last year, a remarkable young woman named Carrie Tan, who is helping underprivileged women become financially self-sufficient. And Carrie talked about coming together with young people from across Southeast Asia. She said, "We bonded in our common endeavor to seek to understand and learn from one another in pursuit of our aspirations to a better world."

Young people like Carrie give me hope. And, Prime Minister Lee, based on our work together, I am confident that Singapore and the United States will continue to advance our shared aspirations for a better world for many years to come.

With that, let me turn it over to you, Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Lee. Well, thank you, President Obama.

President Obama, distinguished guests, I am very happy to be here for—on an official visit for the 50th anniversary of our diplomatic relations. I'd like to thank President Obama for his gracious hospitality and for his attention to our bilateral relations, as well as to the wider Asia-Pacific, and specifically, also for his good wishes on the condition of our former President, Mr. S.R. Nathan.

The President and I had a substantive conversation on a wide range of issues. We affirmed our strong multifaceted and longstanding partnership. Our strong economic ties are underpinned by the U.S.-Singapore Free Trade Agreement. Singapore is America's largest trading partner in Southeast Asia, where the U.S. is Singapore's largest foreign direct investor. And many American companies run their regional headquarters in Singapore, and there are many Singapore companies also which are in America. And the relationship deepens year by year.

In the defense area, we have robust cooperation under the ambit of the memorandum—MOU in 1990 and the strategic framework agreement, which we concluded in 2005. Last year, we concluded the enhanced defense cooperation agreement, which expands cooperation into new areas, like humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, cyber defense, and counterterrorism.

We are also deepening security cooperation between our agencies in areas like counterterrorism, cybercrime, corruption, transportation security, and illicit trade enforcement and expanding into new areas like cybersecurity, where our agencies are signing an MOU to work together to protect national security and our economic interests against cyber attacks.

We also share an interest in Smart Cities, so we have discussed how cities can use technology to tackle problems from health care to transportation to delivery of public services. And there's a lot of interest from companies on both sides.

Underpinning the ties between the two countries are the friendships and the relationships between our peoples. Thousands of American students are studying and working in Singapore. Thousands of Singaporeans are studying and working in America. And last Sunday, I hosted a National Day reception for Singaporeans in our Embassy here, and 600 people showed up. It's fitting to mark this special occasion of our 50th anniversary that we are launching a scholarship for Singaporeans and Americans to enable undergraduates to do some exchanges in each other's country and grow our young people closer together and to get to know each other's societies, cultures, strengths, and opportunities to cooperate together. We've recently implemented a trusted traveler program that will also facilitate travel by Singaporeans to the U.S.

The President and I also discussed the TPP. And just now you heard the President give an eloquent explanation of why it is important to America and also to Asia. It's an integral component of America's rebalance to Asia. Apart from the economic benefits—trade, market access, standard setting—it's also vital from a strategic point of view and a strong signal of the U.S. commitment to continue its deep engagement in the region.

We greatly appreciate the efforts of the President and his team to push for the TPP, which grew from a small FTA—which Singapore had started together with Chile, Brunei, and New Zealand, the P–4 group—and now the TPP will be a free trade agreement encompassing 40 percent of the world's population and one-third of the world's GDP. We are near the finish line, and we hope that the countries—particularly the U.S.—will be able to ratify the TPP as soon as possible.

Finally, the President and I discussed our partnership in tackling global challenges, like counterterrorism. It's a problem for all countries. Every day in the newspapers, you read of new attacks somewhere: America, Europe, Middle East, closer to home in Indonesia and Malaysia. We in Southeast Asia are very concerned about this because the terrorists are active in many countries in the region. Several hundred, perhaps a thousand, from Southeast Asia are in the Middle East fighting ISIS. And we have witnessed attacks in both Indonesia and Malaysia that were mounted by ISIS followers under orders from ISIS operatives in the Middle East to launch attacks in their home countries.

So the efforts to counter ISIL, or ISIS, are crucial. And that's why Singapore is a member of the coalition. And we are making a modest contribution to the effort, and we're going to be sending a medical team to Iraq. We have already been participating with air-to-air refueling, image interpretation, and in other ways. And now we are going to send a medical team into Iraq.

It is also important to fundamentally address a root source of violent extremism in order to counter the underlying ideology of ISIL, as well as to address the issues of extremist and exclusive views being propagated by ISIL.

So these are major issues which we have discussed amongst our two countries, and we look forward to working together and taking our relationship even further forward.

President Obama. Thank you.

First question is Margaret Brennan [CBS News].

Republican Presidential Nominee Donald J. Trump/Libya/Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) Terrorist Organization

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Given the Republican nominee's recent comments about the Khan family and his statement that, if President, he would consider recognizing Russia's annexation of Crimea, does it make you question his fitness to be President?

And secondly, sir, on Libya. You've said in the past that the worst mistake of your Presidency may have been your failure to plan for the aftermath of that 2011 NATO intervention in Libya. Do you see your new decision to bomb ISIS there as a direct result of that?

President Obama. Yes, I think the Republican nominee is unfit to serve as President. I said so last week, and he keeps on proving it. The notion that he would attack a Gold Star family that had made such extraordinary sacrifices on behalf of our country, the fact that he doesn't appear to have basic knowledge around critical issues in Europe, in the Middle East, in Asia, means that he's woefully unprepared to do this job.

And this is not just my opinion. I think what's been interesting is the repeated denunciations of his statements by leading Republicans, including the Speaker of the House and the Senate Majority Leader and prominent Republicans like John McCain. And the question, I think, that they have to ask themselves is, if you are repeatedly having to say in very strong terms that what he has said is unacceptable, why are you still endorsing him? What does this say about your party that this is your standard bearer? This isn't a situation where you have an episodic gaffe. This is daily and weekly, where they are distancing themselves from statements he's making. There has to be a point in which you say, this is not somebody I can support for President of the United States, even if he purports to be a member of my party.

And the fact that that has not yet happened makes some of these denunciations ring hollow. I don't doubt their sincerity. I don't doubt that they were outraged about some of the statements that Mr. Trump and his supporters

made about the Khan family. But there has to come a point at which you say, somebody who makes those kinds of statements doesn't have the judgment, the temperament, the understanding to occupy the most powerful position in the world.

Because a lot of people depend on the White House getting stuff right, and this is different than just having policy disagreements. Now, I recognize that they all profoundly disagree with myself or Hillary Clinton on tax policy or on certain elements of foreign policy. But there have been Republican Presidents with whom I disagreed with, but I didn't have a doubt that they could function as President. I think I was right and Mitt Romney and John McCain were wrong on certain policy issues, but I never thought that they couldn't do the job. And had they won, I would have been disappointed, but I would have said to all Americans, they are—this is our President, and I know they're going to abide by certain norms and rules and common sense, will observe basic decency, will have enough knowledge about economic policy and foreign policy and our constitutional traditions and rule of law that our Government will work, and then we'll compete 4 years from now to try to win an election.

But that's not the situation here. And that's not just my opinion; that is the opinion of many prominent Republicans. There has to come a point at which you say, enough. And the alternative is that the entire party, the Republican Party, effectively endorses and validates the positions that are being articulated by Mr. Trump. And as I said in my speech last week, I don't think that actually represents the views of a whole lot of Republicans out there.

With respect to Libya, I have said on several occasions that we did the right thing in preventing what could have been a massacre, a blood bath in Libya. And we did so as part of an international coalition and under U.N. mandate. But I think that all of us, collectively, were not sufficiently attentive to what had to happen the day after and the day after and the day after that, in order to ensure that there were strong structures in place to assure basic security and peace inside of Libya.

The good news is, is that we now have the beginnings of a government in the Government of National Accord. They are serious about trying to bring all the factions together to start creating a basic security structure to begin to monitor Libya's borders and to cooperate internationally to deal with issues like ISIL penetration on their territory. And at the request of that Government, after they had already made significant progress against ISIL and had essentially pushed ISIL into a very confined area in and around Sirte, it is in America's national security interests in our fight against ISIL to make sure that they're able to finish the job. And so we're working in partnership with them to assure that ISIL does not get a stronghold in Libya, even as Libya begins what is going to be a long process to establish a functioning government and security system there.

So the good news is that they recognize these—this terrorist organization in their midst is contrary to their national interests, as well as the world's. And we're hopeful that having completed this process of driving ISIL out, they will then be in a position to start bringing the parties together inside that country. And not only us, but the Europeans and other countries around the world have a great interest in seeing stability in Libya, because that—the absence of stability has helped to fuel some of the challenges that we've seen in terms of the migration crisis in Europe and some of the humanitarian tragedies that we've seen in the open seas between Libya and Europe.

Prime Minister Lee. All right, Nicholas [Nicholas Fang, Mediacorp].

Singapore-U.S. Military Cooperation/Singapore-U.S. Relations/Singapore-China Relations

Q. Thank you, PM Lee and President Obama. First question is for Prime Minister Lee. You've spoken about the continuation of the U.S. rebalance being a significant part of peace and stability in Asia. How do you envision this continuation proceeding in the next 50 years? And what role do you see Singapore playing in this context? What are some of the

hot-button issues that we're likely to face as the U.S., hopefully, continues its rebalance?

Second question. You've mentioned the strong bipartisan links that Singapore has had with nine different U.S. Presidents from both sides of the political divide, a very strong record there. How would we address a U.S. leader which adopts a stance that it's more closed off, more antiglobalization, for example, if we see that in November?

President Obama, I have a question about the military collaboration which has been a cornerstone of the relationship between Singapore and the U.S., especially coming on the heels of the latest announcement of the medical team to the global coalition against ISIS. With the rising threat of terror in Asia and indeed the rest of the world, the potential for military confrontation in the South China Sea, how do you see Singapore featuring in U.S. plans to address this going forward?

And last question, "Four more years" is a phrase that I think you've been hearing a little bit in the past few weeks and months. And while that's not possible—[*laughter*]—if it were, how would you continue developing relationships with Singapore? What would be your key focus going forward, maybe the next 50 years as well? Thank you.

Prime Minister Lee. Well, 50 years is a very long time. [*Laughter*] Fifty years ago, nobody imagined what the world would be like today or what Singapore would be like today, and that we would have such a deep and broad relationship and so many things to do together.

We would like to build on this for the next 50 years. It depends on how we—each of our countries does: in Singapore, whether we are able to remain stable, prosperous, open, successful; in America, whether you remain one of the dynamic, vibrant, leading economies in the world, in a world in which there are other powers, other centers of creativity and technology and science and progress, but yet it's a unique participant with a history of contributing to the world not just for your own interests, but because you believe that the world should be a better place for all countries.

And if America can do that, and if Singapore can maintain our success, then I think there are many opportunities for us to make common cause together. And then the rebalancing, which the President has enunciated and executed, will sustain and endure for many years to come. It will be a very different world. The countries will grow; other countries will slow down. Demographics will have a big factor to come. I mean, if we look at Japan, their population has been shrinking, and they will have to do something, somehow, to turn it around. Otherwise, 50 more years of population shrinking and you have a very small country left in terms of economy, in terms of influence internationally.

Singapore, too, has demographic issues. America has a demographic change—the population is not shrinking, but the composition is changing. And in this situation, we have to adjust to a new world, maintaining our position and our ability to compete and yet knowing that it's not going to be the same as it was in 1946, when America was about half the world's GDP. So—or one-quarter of the world's GDP.

So that's the crucial factor over the next 50 years. As for what we do over bipartisan links, if there's a U.S. leader who is more closed off and wants to turn inward, I don't think this is the right forum or indeed there is any right forum for me to talk about U.S. politics in public at this moment. We will work with whoever is the U.S. administration, whichever party. We've worked with five Republican and four Democratic administrations. And our experience of American elections, Presidential elections, has been that many pressures build up during the election campaign. And after the elections, in a calmer, cooler atmosphere, positions are rethought, strategies are nuanced, and a certain balance is kept in the direction of the ship of state. It doesn't turn completely upside down.

The Americans take pride in having a system with checks of—with checks and balances so that it is not so easy to do things, but it is not so easy to completely mess things up. [*Laughter*] No. And we admire that, and sometimes, we depend upon that. [*Laughter*]

President Obama. The—he's absolutely right. [*Laughter*] The wisdom of our Founders.

With respect to military cooperation, obviously, Singapore is a small country, but as I've said before, it punches above its weight. Because so much of our work in the Asia-Pacific region is not a matter of active conflict, but rather creating an architecture, a framework of rules and norms that keeps the peace and that has underwritten security for the region and for us for many years now. And Singapore is so often the adult in the room, the level head, that can help us work with a wide range of countries around certain issues, help defuse tensions. In many ways, the diplomatic work and collaboration that we do with Singapore is as critical, if not more critical, than the work militarily.

But what is also true is the nature of threats today, when you think of cyber threats or our concern about enforcing sanctions against North Korea to ensure nonproliferation of nuclear materials or being able to countermessage ISIL in a place like Southeast Asia and ensure information sharing with countries where there may be a budding terrorist threat, those are all issues of military finesse and intelligence and precision, and that—those are areas where Singapore excels.

So, in addition to being a very important logistical hub and center for our operations, the partnership that we're able to maintain helps us to work with a whole range of other countries much more effectively than we would if Singapore weren't there and we were having to just try to gather up all these countries individually. And that's where ASEAN and the East Asia Summit, I think, has also been very important, because it is institutionalizing many of these practices in ways that, hopefully, avoids conflict in the first place, which would be in everybody's interest.

With the—as far as where the relationship goes, I think the Prime Minister is absolutely right: Fifty years from now, it's very hard to anticipate where we're going, but there are certain trends that I think are inevitable. The Asia-Pacific region will continue to grow and will continue to account for a larger share of the world's economy. There are going to be countries in the Southeast Asian region that look to follow the path of Singapore into a mature, advanced economy. It is going to be a big market. And the United States is still going to have a massive interest in maintaining itself as a Asia-Pacific power and in maintaining strong bonds of trade and commerce and scientific exchange and educational exchange.

And given the close strategic interests, but maybe even more importantly, the close people-to-people ties between America and Singapore, I think we can anticipate that that will be just as strong 50 years from now as it is today.

The—Singapore has to take into account not just American interests. China is a big neighbor, and there are strong commercial ties and cultural ties there as well. And in that sense, Singapore actually can serve as a useful partner with us and with China to assure that the U.S.-Sino relationship moves in a productive way, which I think would be in the interests of both countries.

So this is going to be a central engine for world growth. And if we do a good job in maintaining stability, ensuring a rules-based order, continuing to promote greater transparency and reducing corruption in the region so that all people are benefiting from the rapid growth that is taking place, then I think the future 50 years from now will be bright.

Jordan Fabian [The Hill].

Trans-Pacific Partnership/Democratic National Committee Cyber Attack/Cybersecurity/Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You're here today touting the Trans-Pacific Partnership, but Hillary Clinton is against it. Her Vice Presidential nominee, Tim Kaine, has now reversed himself and is now against it. Donald Trump is too, meaning that the next President is opposed to this deal. So my question is, if you take both candidates at their word, how do you plan to get Congress to pass this deal during the lame duck, and what's your plan to convince Members to do so given the opposition I just described?

And secondly, security officials inside and outside the Government have said they are almost certain that the hack of the Democratic National Committee came from Russia. Does it look to you like Russia is meddling in the U.S. election? And what impact should you—should that have on your administration's relationship with Moscow?

President Obama. Good. Well, right now I'm President—[*laughter*]—and I'm for it. And I think I've got the better argument. And I've made this argument before; I'll make it again. We are part of a global economy. We're not reversing that. It can't be reversed, because it is driven by technology, and it is driven by travel and cargo containers and the fact that the demand for products inside of our country means we've got to get some things from other places, and our export sector is a huge contributor to jobs and our economic well-being. Most manufactured products now have—involve a global supply chain where parts are made in all corners of the globe and converge and then get assembled and packaged and sold. And so the notion that we're going to pull that up, root and branch, is unrealistic. Point number one.

Point number two: It is absolutely true—the evidence shows—that some past trade deals have not delivered on all the benefits that were promised and had very localized costs. There were communities that were hurt because plants moved out. People lost jobs. Jobs were created because of those trade deals, but jobs were also lost. And people who experienced those losses, those communities didn't get as much help as they needed to.

And what is also true is, as a consequence of globalization and automation, what you've seen is labor, workers losing leverage and capital being mobile, being able to locate around the world. That has all contributed to growing inequality both here in the United States, but in many advanced economies. So there's a real problem, but the answer is not cutting off globalization. The answer is, how do we make sure that globalization, technology, automation—those things work for us, not against us. And TPP is designed to do precisely that.

Number one, it knocks out 18,000 tariffs that other countries place on American products and goods. Our economy currently has fewer tariffs, is more open than many of our trading partners. So, if everybody agrees that we're going to have lower tariffs, that's good for American businesses and American workers. And we should want that; we should pursue it.

Number two, the complaint about previous trade deals was that labor agreements and environmental agreements sounded good, but they weren't enforceable the same way you could complain about tariffs and actually get action to ensure that tariffs were not enforced. Well, TPP actually strengthens labor agreements and environmental agreements. And they are just as enforceable as any other part of the agreement. In fact, people take them so seriously that right now, for example, Vietnam is drafting and presenting unprecedented labor reforms in Vietnam, changing their constitution to recognize worker organizations in Vietnam for the first time.

So what we're doing is, we're raising standards for workers in those countries, which means it's harder for them to undercut labor standards here in the United States. The same is true for environmental standards. The same is true for things like human trafficking, where we've got a country like Malaysia taking really serious efforts to crack down on human trafficking. Why? Because TPP says you need to. It gives us leverage to promote things that progressives and people here in this country, including labor unions, say they care about.

So, if you care about preventing abuse of workers, child labor, wildlife trafficking, overfishing, the decimation of forests, all those things are addressed in this agreement. I have not yet heard anybody make an argument that the existing trading rules are better for issues like labor rights and environmental rights than they would be if we got TPP passed.

And so I'm going to continue to make this case. And I've got some very close friends, people I admire a lot, but who I just disagree with them. And that's okay. I respect the arguments that they're making. They're coming from a

sincere concern about the position of workers and wages in this country. But I think I've got the better argument, and I've got the evidence to support it.

And hopefully, after the election is over and the dust settles, there will be more attention to the actual facts behind the deal, and it won't just be a political symbol or a political football. And I will actually sit down with people on both sides, on the right and on the left. I'll sit down publicly with them and we'll go through the whole provisions. I would enjoy that, because there's a lot of misinformation.

I'm really confident I can make the case, this is good for American workers and the American people. And people said we weren't going to be able to get the trade authority to even present this before Congress, and somehow, we muddled through and got it done. And I intend to do the same with respect to the actual agreement.

You had a second question. That was a long answer. I apologize, Mr. Prime Minister, but every once in a while——

Q. The DNC hack from Russia.

President Obama. Oh. The FBI is still doing an investigation. You're right that there have been some assessments made that this might have been a Russian hack.

What I can tell you without commenting on the specifics is that there are a lot of countries out there that are trying to hack into our stuff, governmental databases, but also private sector databases and non-for-profit databases. And this is why we've stood up such an aggressive effort to strengthen our cybersecurity.

And we have provisions in place where if we see evidence of a malicious attack by a state actor, we can impose potentially certain proportional penalties. But that requires us to really be able to pin down and know what we're talking about. And so I don't want to get out ahead of the legal evidence and facts that we may have in order to make those kinds of decisions.

More broadly, we're trying to promote international norms and rules that say there are certain things that states should not be doing to each other when it comes to cyber attacks. There are certain things that are out of bounds. And those norms, I think, are going to slowly build and get more adherence over time. But it's—we're still early in the process. I mean, in some ways, the explosion of the Internet and its importance to our communication systems has far outstripped the legal architecture to protect them, and we're playing catchup. But we're going to have to keep on at it.

In terms of how it affects our relationship with Russia, look, I think we've already got a lot of differences with Russia on a whole bunch of issues. But I think that we've been able to try to stay focused on those areas where we still have a common interest, understanding that we have deep disagreements on issues like Ukraine, but perhaps, potentially, we have an interest in bringing an end to violence in Syria. How do we balance those issues? That's pretty standard statecraft at this point with Russia.

If in fact Russia engaged in this activity, it's just one on a long list of issues that me and Mr. Putin talk about and that I've got a real problem with. And so I don't think that it wildly swings what is a tough, difficult relationship that we have with Russia right now. But it's not going to stop us from still trying to pursue solutions so that we can, for example, implement the Minsk agreement and get Russia and those separatists to lay down arms and stop bullying Ukraine. That's not going to stop us from trying to make sure that we can bring a political transition inside of Syria that can end the hardship there. Okay?

Prime Minister Lee. Can I say something about the TPP? I don't want to wade into your domestic politics, but looking at it from somebody on the other side of the Pacific who has been intimately involved and, in fact, triggered the whole process, because we started the P–4, the little FTA on which the TPP formed and has just become this important initiative.

The economic arguments for the TPP in terms of trade—I think the President has presented them eloquently, what the benefits are to American companies. It's a deal which the countries have negotiated, each one providing market access on their side in return for gaining market access on the other side, each one committing to rules in exchange for the other

side committing to rules. It's a hard-fought bargaining process. The negotiators spent many trips, many nights, many dawns, and fought it out.

But actually, at the end of it, everybody must decide, is it a plus or a minus for them? And I think in your case, Mike Froman did a very good job as USTR. Our various trade representatives and negotiators did their best to make sure that they could bring back something which the political leaderships could stand by and support. And it's an achievement that all the members of the TPP, at the end of this, are still with us, and nobody has dropped out of this. So, obviously, there is something in it for each one of us.

And I think we should also look at the other side of the economic benefit, which is not the producers—I am making, I am exporting, therefore I am earning a job—but also I am spending, I am consuming, I am importing, and because it's freed up trade, I am getting a wider range of products, of services, of opportunities, which will improve my livelihood. People talk about Walmart, that products come from all over Asia. Who benefits—Walmart? Many people in America, not just exporters, but even people living in the Rust Belt, people living in the middle—Midwest. These are part of your everyday invisible standard of living, and yet it's real, and it's valuable.

So, in terms of the economic benefits, the TPP is a big deal. I think in terms of America's engagement of the region, you have put a reputation on the line. It is the big thing which America is doing in the Asia-Pacific with the Obama administration, consistently over many, many years of hard work and pushing. And your partners, your friends who have come to the table, who have negotiated, each one of them has overcome some domestic political objection, some sensitivity, some political cost to come to the table and make this deal.

And if, at the end, waiting at the altar, the bride doesn't arrive—[*laughter*]—I think there are people who are going to feel—be very hurt, not just emotionally, but really damaged for a long time to come. Mr. Abe, for example, several of his predecessors thought seriously about and decided not to participate in the TPP. They came very close. They prepared the ground; they walked away. But Mr. Abe came through and decided to commit. Why? Because he wants to help. He wants his country to benefit and to open up its markets, and this is one way to do it.

And you don't do this. Well, it hurts Mr. Abe is one thing, but it hurts your relationship with Japan, your security agreement with Japan. And the Japanese, living in an uncertain world, depending on an American nuclear umbrella, will have to say, on trade, the Americans could not follow through; if it's life and death, whom do I have to depend upon? It's an absolutely serious calculation, which will not be said openly, but I have no doubts will be thought.

I think if you go beyond that, I'd like to link up the TPP question with an earlier question from Nicholas, which is, where do we go over the next 50 years? And that really depends whether we go towards interdependence and therefore peaceful cooperation, or whether we go for self-sufficiency, rivalry, and therefore a higher risk of conflict.

Asia has tried both. The world has tried both. In the 1930s with the—with Smoot-Hawley, with the Depression, with a very difficult international environment, you went for protectionist policies, you had a rivalry with Japan, which led to war. After the war, because America was open, because you promoted trade, because you encouraged investments and encouraged other countries to open up, therefore, the Asia-Pacific has been peaceful and the Pax Americana has been a pax and not a war.

If over the next 50 years, you continue to work towards interdependence and cooperation and mutual prosperity, then 50 years from now, we can say these have been peaceful years and we have made further progress together. But if you go in the opposite direction, and you decide that this is a big Pacific but it's big enough to split it down the middle, and one chunk is mine, and the other chunk belongs to some of the Asians—China or India or Japan—I think that's a very different world.

One of the reasons why you don't have a—you have a manageable relationship with China now is because you have trade with them. It's enormous; it's mutually beneficial; both sides want to maintain that relationship. If you didn't, it would be like the Soviet Union during the cold war when you had negligible trade and while you still had to find ways to work together, but it's much harder.

Now, the TPP doesn't include China, although some people think it does, but the TPP points a direction towards the world, towards your whole orientation of your society. And if you set the wrong direction, maybe in the next 50 years, sometime, you will turn around, but it will cost you many years and the world will have to pay quite a high price.

Yes.

Trans-Pacific Partnership/China/Asia-U.S. Relations

Q. My name is Lee U-Wen from the Business Times in Singapore. Good afternoon, President Obama and Prime Minister Lee. I have two questions. The first is just a follow-up to the TPP. I mean, a lot has been said—everyone knows what's at stake—but what is the future of the TPP if it does not get ratified by January, the lame duck session? What—the fear is that if things wait too long, the—it might need to be reopened up for renegotiation and that will probably kill the deal. So what is—post-January, is that—how can we reassure the TPP nations and the people that there is the political will to get this done as soon as possible?

The second question is for President Obama. We are almost at the end of your 8 years in office. I would like you to evaluate the progress of the U.S. rebalance to Asia. What is the—what is something that you're most proud of? Is there something that you would have done differently? And what is your message to your successor, whoever he or she may be, to continue to engage Singapore, Southeast Asia, and the rest of the Asia-Pacific? Thank you.

President Obama. Yes. Well, with respect to TPP, I thought that Prime Minister Lee's points were right on target. And this is an economic agreement, but what we've learned in history is, is that you can't separate out economic interests and issues and security issues and interests.

And the Prime Minister is absolutely right. We have benefited from enormous peace and prosperity around the world, an unprecedented period where the great powers were not engaged in conflict, in part because of growing interdependence. If you think about those parts of the world where we still see conflict, where we still see high levels of violence, they're typically places that are less integrated into the world economy, and there's a reason for that.

So I think there is a powerful economic case, just a basic bread-and-butter case to be made about why this is good for Americans workers and good for American exports and ultimately good for American wages, if it's structured properly. But I also think that there is a strong security component to this. And what I also think is important is for people to recognize that the alternative is not TPP or some imaginary circumstance in which suddenly we're able to sell goods around the world wherever we want, but nobody is able to sell goods to us; where we can operate anywhere around the world under fair rules, but they can't operate here in that fashion. That's not—whatever is being imagined as the alternative is not the alternative.

The alternative is what we have today: a situation in which we don't have as many protections around labor and environmental issues as we'd like; a situation in which there are countries like Japan that sell a lot of goods here, but that keep pretty restricted access for U.S. companies and U.S. workers to their markets. And Prime Minister Lee is right that Prime Minister Abe of Japan, for example, has taken some significant risks because he knows that he needs to make his economy more competitive and as a consequence is willing to open up access that we haven't seen in the past. And that's a big market, still one of the top three economies in the world.

So the last point I'd make around this is China. As Prime Minister Lee mentioned, China is

not a part of TPP. But if we don't establish strong rules, norms for how trade and commerce are conducted in the Asia-Pacific region, then China will. I mean, China is already engaging all the countries in the region around its own version of trade agreements. And they're sure not worried about labor standards or environmental standards or human trafficking or anticorruption measures. So you get a low-standard, lowest common denominator trade deal. And if America isn't creating high standards, then China's rules will govern in the fastest growing part of the world.

That's bad for us economically, but it's also bad for security interests. It's also bad for the interests in promoting norms against child labor or against human trafficking or making sure that everybody is working harder to raise conservation standards. And that's the alternative. That's the option. So I think it is very important for us to get this done.

In terms of assurances, nothing in life is certain, but we've got a pretty good track record of getting stuff done when I think it's important. And I will say this: that this actually is not just a Obama administration initiative. This concept began in a Republican administration. We pushed it through. We made it happen. We made sure that the things that I care about in terms of labor and environmental standards were incorporated into it. But historically, this has had strong bipartisan support.

So the bottom line is, we'll go out there, and we're going to make those arguments, and ultimately, I think we're going to be successful.

In terms of my rebalance legacy, across the board, we are just in the game. We are focused on Asia in a way that we weren't when I came into office. And the countries in Asia have noticed. Our alliances are stronger. Our security arrangements are deeper, whether in Australia or the Philippines or Singapore. Our defense budgets reflect our commitment to things like maritime security in the region. The continuing efforts around building the East Asia Summit architecture means that there's the kind of day-to-day interaction around a whole range of issues, whether it's disaster relief, or public health issues or counterterrorism. There's consultations that are taking place today that were not taking place 8 years ago.

So I think on every dimension, we are in a much stronger position to engage, influence, and learn from our Asia-Pacific partners.

The thing I probably enjoy most has been our Young Southeast Asian Leaders program, just because whenever I meet with the young people from ASEAN countries, I am inspired. It makes me very optimistic about the future and what's going to happen over those next 50 years. Because if you ask them about the future that they want to see, they are very much committed to an interdependent world, a world in which people are learning and exchanging ideas and engaged in scientific and educational exchange and a world in which people's different cultures and backgrounds are a source of strength and cooperation as opposed to conflict and fear.

And that's true in Southeast Asia. That's true in Africa. That's true in Latin America. That's true in Europe. A lot of this fear—the choice that was posed by Prime Minister Lee between interdependence and self-sufficiency that is not achievable and ultimately rivalry and conflict—those who opt for rivalry are folks who are looking backwards. You talk to young people around the world, they understand that interdependence is the way that we're going to assure peace and prosperity for all of us for years to come.

And so that may be the thing that has some of the most lasting impact. I suspect in some of those town hall meetings I've had, there are some future Prime Ministers and Presidents and business leaders and non-for-profit leaders that are going to do great things, and I'm glad to have been able to have played a small part in that.

Prime Minister Lee. Thank you. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:15 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Carrie Tan, founder and executive director, Daughters of Tomorrow; Khizr and Ghazala Khan, parents of Capt. Humayun Khan, USA,

who was killed in Iraq in 2004; Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton; 2008 Republican Presidential nominee Sen. John S. McCain III; 2012 Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney; and President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia.

Joint Statement by President Obama and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore
August 2, 2016

1. At the invitation of the President of the United States of America Barack Obama, Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore Lee Hsien Loong made an official visit to the United States to celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations and to enhance the bilateral strategic partnership. For half a century, the two countries have built a strong relationship anchored by robust economic cooperation, security and defense cooperation, and enduring people-to-people ties. Beyond bilateral cooperation, the two countries have worked as close partners to build a rules-based economic and security order for the Asia-Pacific and to address challenges on the global stage, including economic prosperity, climate change, terrorism, transnational crime, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. On the occasion of the visit and the August 2, 2016 meeting between the two leaders, the United States and Singapore adopted this Joint Statement, affirming a continued commitment to advancing their strategic partnership in the areas below.

Supporting Robust Economic Cooperation and Commercial Connectivity and Driving Innovation

2. The U.S.-Singapore economic and commercial relationship provides a model to the world for how open markets and fair trade practices increase prosperity and drive innovation. Our shared economic priorities embrace trade liberalization, market reform, trade security, capacity building, innovation, entrepreneurship, climate change mitigation, clean energy, intellectual property protection, fair labor practices, and cyber security. Today, over 3,700 U.S. companies are located in Singapore, making Singapore a premier destination for U.S. businesses. A growing number of Singapore companies have also established a presence in the United States.

3. The two sides noted that the U.S.-Singapore Free Trade Agreement, the first such U.S. agreement in Asia and now in its 12th year, is a gold-standard agreement that has shaped other bilateral and multilateral FTAs in the region. The largest of these, the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), reflects the commercial dimension of the U.S. rebalance to Asia and Singapore's commitment to high trade standards. Both countries emphasized the strategic and economic importance of all participating countries to ratify the TPP agreement expeditiously, and both committed to strengthen trade capacity building among TPP members.

4. The two leaders affirmed efforts to support expanding economic ties through closer cooperation on bilateral tax issues, and noted ongoing discussions between the two sides on a tax information exchange agreement (TIEA), which will permit our two countries to exchange relevant tax information to enforce our respective tax laws, and an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) that provides for reciprocal automatic exchange of information with respect to certain financial accounts under the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA). Both sides are committed to complete negotiations and sign the TIEA and the reciprocal FATCA IGA as soon as possible with the aim of doing so by the end of 2017. The leaders noted the two countries would maintain discussions on whether to negotiate an Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreement in the future, taking into account double taxation with respect to both U.S. investments in Singapore and Singaporean investments in the United

States and our mutual interest in avoiding base erosion and profit shifting by multinationals.

5. The two leaders forged new cooperation on Smart City development and digital innovation. This includes (a) identifying opportunities for research collaboration between the National Science Foundation and the Singaporean National Research Foundation, (b) sharing of best practices and information exchange between both Governments on topics such as smart city policies, digital government, urban innovation and digital citizen engagement, through, among other things, the Digital Government Exchange forum to be held in Singapore and the Discover Global Markets: Building Smart Cities forum to be held in Chicago, and exchanges between the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and the Smart Nation Program Office in the Prime Minister's Office; and (c) facilitating exchanges for start-ups, as reflected in the MoU between the city of Austin and Singapore.

6. The two nations look forward to deepening their economic cooperation including under the U.S.-ASEAN Connect ("Connect") initiative, announced in February 2016 by President Obama during the U.S.-ASEAN Leaders Summit at Sunnylands. As the strategic framework for U.S. economic engagement with ASEAN, Connect will build upon U.S. government economic initiatives within ASEAN to support regional integration efforts and cooperation with the private sector. Singapore offered support for a new Connect program focused on the digital economy, which could include innovation policy workshops under the Third Country Training Program. The two leaders confirmed collaboration on the third US-ASEAN Connect event to be held in Singapore in 2016, which will focus on themes such as digital economy and financial technology (FinTech). The inaugural Singapore FinTech Festival will be supported by the Connect Center in Singapore and the United States Department of Commerce. The two leaders welcomed the signing of an MOU between the US Department of Commerce and Singapore's Ministry of Trade and Industry to promote collaboration in the infrastructure sector between US and Singapore companies in Southeast Asia and third-party markets.

Enhancing Security and Defense Cooperation

7. The two leaders reaffirmed the strong bilateral defense partnership, underpinned by the 1990 Memorandum of Understanding and 2005 Strategic Framework Agreement, and most recently elevated by the 2015 Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement. Singapore trains or stations approximately 1000 personnel each year in the United States. The United States deploys aircraft and ships to Singapore on a rotational basis to conduct a variety of regional maritime patrol activities covering counterpiracy, counterterrorism, humanitarian assistance, and disaster response. President Obama welcomed Singapore's continued interest in the F35 aircraft. The two leaders expressed support to explore new training opportunities for the Singapore Armed Forces in Guam, with an eye toward a potential long-term training detachment for the Republic of Singapore Air Force.

8. The United States and Singapore are committed to broadening and deepening our cooperation to promote an open, interoperable, reliable, and secure global Internet that supports innovation, economic growth and social development. We are committed to ensuring that the digital economy remains a force for robust economic growth and prosperity. Both sides expressed strong support for the new U.S.-Singapore MOU on Cooperation in the Area of Cybersecurity, which lays a foundation for expanding our cooperation on cyber issues. The United States and Singapore affirmed their support for the multi-stakeholder approach to Internet governance. We reaffirm, moreover, that the same rights that people have offline must also be protected online. Both sides pledged to deepen their information exchange and sharing, to conduct new bilateral initiatives on critical infrastructure cybersecurity, and to continue to cooperate on cybercrime, cyber defense, and on regional capacity building activities, including through joint exercises, regular exchanges and visits, joint R&D and capability

development, regional cyber capacity building programs or initiatives.

9. The two leaders endorsed a common approach to international cyber stability, affirming that international law applies to State conduct in cyberspace, and committing to promote voluntary norms of responsible state behavior in cyberspace. The United States and Singapore affirm that no country should conduct or knowingly support online activity that intentionally damages critical infrastructure or otherwise impairs the use of critical infrastructure to provide services to the public; that no country should conduct or knowingly support activity intended to prevent national computer security incident response teams (CSIRTs) from responding to cyber incidents, or use CSIRTs to enable online activity that is intended to do harm; that every country should cooperate, consistent with its domestic law and international obligations, with requests for assistance from other states in mitigating malicious cyber activity emanating from its territory; and that no country should conduct or knowingly support cyber-enabled theft of intellectual property, including trade secrets or other confidential business information, with the intent of providing competitive advantages to its companies or commercial sectors.

10. First discussed by both Leaders when they met in 2013, both leaders welcomed a new joint statement to extend the Law Enforcement and Homeland Security, and Safety Cooperation Dialogue for another 3 years, which reinforces the strong cooperation in law enforcement matters, including counter-terrorism and anti-corruption, between the two countries. The two leaders also welcomed the MOU, which will be signed in September, between Singapore's Home Team Academy (HTA) and the U.S. Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC) to collaborate and share expertise and best practices in law enforcement training, leadership development, and capacity building. Both countries sought to increase bilateral and regional cooperation to combat internet and computer crime.

11. The United States has partnered with Singapore on a number of issues related to transportation security. Both sides welcomed the 2016 signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Transportation Security Administration and Ministry of Transport on capability development in the Asia-Pacific Region through joint training and capacity building to enhance the level of aviation security standards. The first joint training outreach event will take place in Singapore in 2017 where Asia-Pacific States will be invited to participate.

Addressing Regional and Global Challenges

12. Both countries reaffirmed their commitment to ASEAN Centrality and to strengthening the regional architecture in the Asia-Pacific, including existing ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the East Asia Summit (EAS) and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) to better address common transnational challenges such as maritime security, climate change and trafficking-in-persons. The two leaders highlighted the importance of the U.S.-ASEAN strategic partnership, and the principles underpinning this relationship as outlined in the Sunnylands Declaration, for the peace, prosperity, and security of the Asia-Pacific.

13. The two leaders highlighted the success of the U.S.-Singapore Third Country Training Program (TCTP), which has received more than 700 officials from across ASEAN since its establishment in 2012. They expressed support for its continued growth, including in the areas of trade policy, environment protection, and addressing non-traditional security threats.

14. The two leaders resolved to enforce UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2270, adopted in response to the DPRK's January nuclear test, which imposes unprecedented sanctions on the DPRK. The United States welcomed and offered full support for Singapore's commitment to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including the full and effective implementation of UNSCR 2270. Both leaders welcomed the commitment to expand bilateral cooperation to ensure the enforcement of this resolution, including on cargo inspections, shipping, and finance. The United States welcomed and offered full

support of Singapore's commitment to strengthen advanced cargo screening procedures, which is essential to securing the global supply chain, including through Singapore's decision to conduct a three-year trial of the World Customs Organization's Cargo Targeting System. Such measures play an essential role in securing global commerce, not only against proliferation from all sources, but against terrorism and other criminal activity.

15. The two leaders acknowledged the continued global threat posed by terrorism and the need to enhance information sharing on counterterrorism related issues. The two countries have also co-invested $30 million to date under the 2006 Combating Terrorism Research and Development agreement to improve capabilities to combat terrorism. Both leaders welcomed the extension of the agreement for another 10 years for investments up to $100 million. The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment as Counter-ISIL coalition members to degrade and defeat ISIL. President Obama welcomed Singapore's commitment to continue existing contributions to coalition efforts, including the deployment of refueling tanker aircraft and an Imagery Analysis Team, as well as Singapore's new commitment to deploy medical support to Iraq.

16. The leaders reaffirmed the importance of maintaining regional peace and stability and upholding freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea. They emphasized the importance of resolving disputes peacefully, including full respect for legal and diplomatic processes, without resorting to the threat or use of force, in accordance with international law, including as reflected in the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. They urged all parties to avoid actions that would escalate tensions, including the further militarization of outposts in the South China Sea. They reaffirmed their support for the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and the expeditious conclusion of a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea.

17. Both countries affirmed the importance of addressing climate change and transitioning towards a low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development pathway, and committed to pursue a range of initiatives to advance these goals. They resolved to work together to implement the historic Paris Agreement. The United States reaffirms its commitment to join the Agreement this year, and Singapore commits to taking the domestic steps necessary to join as soon as possible, with a view to joining in 2016. They also called on all nations to support the Agreement's early entry into force in 2016. Both nations affirmed the importance of supporting the development and implementation of the transparency framework established under the Paris Agreement, with common modalities, procedures and guidelines. Both nations look forward to the early operationalization of the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency. They resolve to explore opportunities to collaborate on institutional and technical capacity-building activities to help other Parties meet the requirements of the transparency framework. Both countries affirmed their commitment to work to adopt an ambitious and comprehensive hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) phase-down amendment in 2016 within the Montreal Protocol pursuant to the Dubai Pathway. They supported the adoption of a global market-based measure (MBM) at the upcoming Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization for implementation from 2020, as part of a collective effort to address climate change through a comprehensive basket of measures. The leaders emphasized the importance of a global MBM in supporting the aviation industry's desire to grow sustainably and prevent a patchwork of national or regional MBM schemes given the cross-border nature of international flights.

18. The two leaders commended the adoption of the fifth Plan of Action in August 2015 under the U.S.-Singapore Free Trade Agreement's environmental cooperation Memorandum of Intent (MOI). To protect our shared environment, the United States and Singapore commit to strengthen cooperation to conserve biodiversity and ecosystems by combating the illegal trade in CITES species, improving the

capacity of institutions, and strengthening policies to ensure effective implementation and enforcement of environmental laws. Singapore also stated its intention to positively consider implementing a ban on the domestic trade in ivory. Both countries also look forward to deepening the exchange of information on environmental policies, best practices and the use of innovative environmental technology and pollution management techniques, and to work closely together and with other WTO Members to conclude an ambitious Environmental Goods Agreement (EGA) that eliminates tariffs on a wide range of environmental goods by the end of the year. We also resolve to cooperate to conserve our oceans and to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, including by implementing port State measures in recognition of the importance of concerted international action to address IUU fishing as reflected in regional and international instruments, including the Port State Measures Agreement.

19. The United States and Singapore affirmed their commitment to advance the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) to assist other countries to implement the International Health Regulations (IHR) and prevent, detect, and respond to biological threats, whether naturally occurring, deliberate or accidental. In 2016, the United States underwent a Joint External Evaluation (JEE) of its national capabilities to achieve the GHSA and other IHR-related targets and will publish the results. In 2017, Singapore will initiate a JEE. The United States has made a commitment to assist at least 31 countries to achieve the GHSA targets, and Singapore will join two GHSA Action Packages to share best practices to assist others. Singapore will also provide experts, where available, to support the assessments of other countries, including within ASEAN.

Strengthening People-to-People Ties

20. Both the United States and Singapore affirmed their commitment to further strengthen the already deep bonds of friendship, cooperation, and mutual understanding between the peoples of the two countries. The United States welcomed the launch of an exchange scholarship program to mark 50 years of diplomatic relations and deepen people-to-people ties. The scholarship will fund summer exchange programs for 50 Singaporean and 50 U.S. students over the course of the next 5 years. In support of the U.S. Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI), which has grown into a network of more than 80,000 youth across the region, the U.S. will convene an Urban Planning Workshop in 2017 in Singapore. Both sides recognized the success of the YSEALI program and the contributions made by its Singaporean participants in promoting innovation, inspiring cross-ASEAN connectivity, and advancing bilateral ties.

21. The United States was pleased to open Global Entry eligibility to include citizens of Singapore from June 2016. Singapore in turn allowed Americans to apply for its enhanced-Immigration Automated Clearance System (eIACS) under the Trusted Traveller Program (TTP). Following the Joint Statement issued by the United States and Singapore on Dec. 1 2014, both countries had worked together to officially launch the TTP on June 27, 2016. The TTP reaffirmed the strong trust and ties that the United States and Singapore enjoy given that Singapore is the 1st ASEAN country to be in the program. These trusted traveler programs will make travel between our two nations more convenient and secure for travelers.

Enhancing our Enduring Partnership

22. Through a half-century of diplomatic relations, the United States and Singapore have forged an expansive and enduring relationship by cooperating on issues of mutual interest and shared principles. Both leaders committed to further enhance the U.S.-Singapore strategic partnership, making it deeper, more substantive, and more effective to better support peace, stability, and cooperation across the region and around the world.

NOTE: The joint statement referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore

August 2, 2016

President Obama. Good evening, everybody. Nearly 50 years ago, President Lyndon Johnson welcomed to the White House the first Prime Minister of a newly independent Singapore, a man he hailed as "a patriot, a brilliant political leader, and a statesman of the New Asia," Singapore's founding father, Lee Kuan Yew. A half century later, Michelle and I are honored to welcome his son: a patriot, a brilliant political leader, and a statesman of a rising, thriving Asia-Pacific. Prime Minister Lee and Mrs. Lee, welcome.

Now, we all know how seriously Singaporeans take their food. [*Laughter*] In Singapore, even the street vendors—the hawker stalls—earn Michelin stars—[*laughter*]—which creates some pressure this evening. We have a lot to live up to. We were tempted to offer each of you a "Singapore Sling" or some chili crab. However, for those of you who know its unmistakable scent, which never seems to go away, you'll understand why we are not serving a fruit known as durian here in the White House. [*Laughter*]

With this visit we're celebrating 50 years of diplomatic relations between our two nations. Yet, even as we mark this anniversary of our formal ties, we honor bonds that stretch back at least 180 years, when Singapore was still a colony and the United States was not far removed from being one ourselves. The first American representative to Singapore was a planter named Joseph Balestier, whose name lives on in one of Singapore's neighborhoods. His wife Maria's legacy lives on in a beautiful church bell that once signaled the evening curfew, and which now rests in Singapore's National Museum, a bell cast in the foundry of Maria's father, Paul Revere. You may have heard of him.

It's a reminder that as we pursue a more peaceful and prosperous order in the Asia-Pacific, our partnership is rooted in more than strategic interests. We're bound together by history, by family, and by friendship. It's the dedication of our men and women in uniform, flying F–15s together across the skies of Idaho. It's the excitement of our students and entrepreneurs, who cross the ocean to learn and to work with each other. And it's the leadership of a son of Singapore who is respected around the world and a trusted partner to the United States.

Prime Minister Lee, when you were sworn in again last year, you spoke of the shared purpose that animates the people of Singapore: "Each of us giving our best, united by our shared ideals, our faith in this nation, and our belief that here we can build something special together." What is true of Singapore is true of the relationship between our two countries.

And so, as Singapore prepares to celebrate its National Day, and 50 years into a shared journey with the United States, I propose a toast.

[*At this point, the President was handed a glass of wine.*]

President Obama. Thank you, sir.

To Prime Minister and Mrs. Lee, and to the friendship and partnership between our peoples, let's continue to build something special together. Onward, Singapore—*Majulah Singapura.* Onward, America. Cheers. *Yam seng.*

[*President Obama offered a toast.*]

Prime Minister Lee.

Prime Minister Lee. Mr. President, Mrs. Obama, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen: I'd like to thank President Obama for his very kind words. Ho Ching and I are delighted to be here. And we are touched by your warm welcome and gracious hospitality. We especially appreciate Mrs. Obama's personal efforts to make our visit a successful one, and for personally overseeing the splendid arrangements for the State Dinner.

Mr. President, when you addressed the U.N. in 2014, you said that "when nations find common ground, not simply based on power, but on principle, then we can make enormous progress." And I'm glad to say that tonight, on the 50th anniversary of our diplomatic relations, our two countries share much common ground and have made great progress together based on shared principles, convergent interests, and mutual respect.

I remember my first meeting with you at the Senate. It was May 2007. You were in the midst of a hard-fought Presidential campaign and not yet the frontrunner for the Democratic nomination. [*Laughter*] But I was struck by your focus, your informed interest in Asia, and your desire to cement America's role in it.

Your years growing up in Indonesia gave you direct experience of Southeast Asia's cultures and challenges. As President, your personal leadership and decision to rebalance to Asia has won America new friends and strengthened old partnerships, including with Singapore. Over half a century working together on multiple issues, Singaporeans and Americans have made many enduring and close personal friendships. So I'm happy to see many of Singapore's old friends here tonight, such as Ambassador Steve Green, who you may not know played a crucial role in teeing up a certain midnight golf game between a lame duck President, Bill Clinton, and our Prime Minister, Mr. Goh Chok Tong, on a rainy night in Brunei during an APEC meeting—[*laughter*]—which led to the U.S.-Singapore Free Trade Agreement. [*Laughter*] Which shows what can be done even during lame duck periods. [*Laughter*]

Singapore admires America's dynamism, vibrancy, and capacity for self-renewal. These qualities attract the best and brightest from around the world. Thousands of Singaporeans study in the U.S., attracted not just by the excellent academic education, but also the unique dynamism of your campuses and the ethos of your society.

This is something that Singapore hopes to emulate as we seek to tap into this spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship. The National University of Singapore has set up overseas colleges in Silicon Valley and New York so that our students from Singapore can intern with high-tech startups. And we are also launching a U.S-Singapore 50th anniversary scholarship to promote greater exchanges and understanding between our young people.

America excels not just through sheer individual talent, but by working together with others. At this year's International Mathematics Olympiad, the U.S. team came in top, beating Singapore. [*Laughter*] And you did so in a remarkable, open, and collaborative manner. You invited students from other competing countries to the U.S. to train with you, including two Singaporeans who benefited from the exposure. It's what globalization means: You compete, but you also cooperate and learn from one another.

In sport, too, some of Singapore's Olympic hopefuls have come to train with America's best athletes. One of our swimmers, Joseph Schooling, is a member of the University of Texas swim team and was a 2016 NCAA champion in the 100 meters and 200 meters butterfly. And we hope he will do well in Rio.

Our armed forces personnel have taken part together in international operations in Afghanistan and in the Middle East. They also train alongside each other on professional courses and joint exercises. I, myself, as a soldier, attending U.S. courses, have personally experienced the dedication, the competence, and the warmth of our hosts. I made good friends, and we still keep in touch after many decades. And they include Frank and Mary McGurk, who were my military sponsors at the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth in Kansas nearly 40 years ago. And they are here tonight.

America is a great nation, not just because of your power and your wealth, but because of your high ideals, openness, and generosity of spirit. You seek to build a world where countries can prosper together. You make common cause with others to fight the problems which plague mankind, be it extremist terrorism, poverty, Ebola, or climate change. That is why 70 years after the Second World War, America is still a welcome power in Asia. We hope these

strengths and qualities will be emulated by others and will enable you to remain engaged in our region for many more years.

To mark the 50th anniversary of our relations, Singapore has named an orchid hybrid in honor of President and Mrs. Obama. And this is a hybrid of breeds native to Singapore and Hawaii, where the President was born—most of us believe. [*Laughter*] We think it's a fitting tribute to America's first Pacific President and a beautiful symbol of the flourishing ties between our countries.

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in a toast to the health and success of the President of the United States.

To the President.

[*Prime Minister Lee offered a toast.*]

Prime Minister Lee. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:10 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Ho Ching, wife of Prime Minister Lee. Prime Minister Lee referred to former U.S. Ambassador to Singapore Steven J. Green; and Col. Frank W. McGurk, USA (Ret.), and his wife Mary. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the audio was incomplete.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session at a Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders Town Hall Meeting
August 3, 2016

The President. Thank you so much! Thank you. Thank you, everybody. Everybody, please sit down, sit down. Everybody, sit down.

Audience members. Yes, we can! Yes, we can! Yes, we can!

The President. Thank you so much! Thank you, everybody. Thank you. Thank you.

Well, it is so good to see all of you. Okay, everybody, settle down, settle down.

[*At this point, audience members sang "Happy Birthday."*]

The President. Yay! Thank you! Well, you know, I—let me first of all just say that—let me first of all say I'm a little disappointed with the lack of enthusiasm. [*Laughter*] Everybody is so shy and quiet. So—[*laughter*].

I—first of all, I want to thank Emmanuel for the great introduction and the outstanding work on behalf of the people of Uganda. Please give Emmanuel a big round of applause. I don't know whether they chose Emmanuel because he's such a great speaker, which he is—[*laughter*]—or because they thought he and I were cousins. [*Laughter*] Because Odama, Obama—[*laughter*]—there must be some connection.

Now, I know that you've been in this fellowship for a few weeks. I know that for many of you, this is your first visit to the United States. So let me start by saying, on behalf of the American people, welcome to the United States.

I don't want to give a long speech, because I'm really here to hear from you and answer your questions and to get your comments and ideas. But I do want to just take a moment to step back and talk about why you being here is so important, not just to me, but to all of our countries and to people around the world.

I stand here as the President of the United States and the son of an African. Michelle and I have always tried to instill in our girls, our daughters, a sense of their heritage—which is American and African and European—with all the strengths and all the struggles of that heritage. We took them to Africa. We wanted to open their eyes to the amazing tapestry of history and culture and music. We looked out from those Doors of No Return. We stood in the cell where Mandela refused to break.

And as President, I've now visited sub-Saharan Africa four times, which is more than any other U.S. President. And even as Africa continues to face enormous challenges: poverty

and disease and conflict, I see a continent on the move. You have one of the world's fastest growing regions, home to a middle class that is projected to grow to over 1 billion consumers. You are more connected by technology and smartphones than ever before as I can see here today. [*Laughter*] Africa is sending more of its children to school. You're saving more lives from HIV/AIDS and infant mortality. And while there's still more work to do to address these challenges, today's Africa is a place of unprecedented prosperity and opportunity.

So, over the past 7½ years, I've worked to transform America's relationship with Africa so that we are equal partners. As so many Africans have told me, you want trade not aid, trade that supports jobs and growth. So we've been working to boost exports with Africa. We're working to promote good governance and human rights, to advance security, to help feed families.

Earlier today I signed a new Executive order so that we're doing even more to support American companies that are interested in doing business in Africa. And this fall, we'll host the second U.S.-Africa Business Forum to encourage more trade and investment. And we're going to keep working together in our Power Africa initiative to bring cleaner electricity to more than 60 million African homes and businesses.

And we're doing this not just because I love the people of Africa, but also because the world will not be able to deal with climate change or terrorism or expanding women's rights—all the issues that we face globally—without a rising and dynamic and self-reliant Africa, and that, more importantly than anything else, depends on a rising generation of new leaders. It depends on you.

That's why 6 years ago I launched the Young African Leaders Initiative, because I've always believed that one person can be a force for positive change. That one person, as Bobby Kennedy famously said when he visited Soweto—that one person can be like a stone, a pebble thrown in a lake, creating ripples. Ripples of hope, he called it. And that's especially true for all of you. You're young, you're talented, optimistic. You're already showing you can make a difference. So what we wanted to do through YALI is to connect you with each other and to resources and to networks that can help you become the leaders in business and government and civil society of tomorrow.

And the response has been overwhelming. Across Africa, more than 250,000 people have joined our YALI network. They get access to online courses. They have a network of peers and mentors across Africa and across the globe. We've issued nearly 150,000 certificates from those courses. I might, when I have a little more time, maybe teach one of those courses myself. The—[*applause*]. Right now I'm kind of busy, but—[*laughter*]. We're training thousands of young people in leadership and entrepreneurship and networking at our four regional leadership centers in Dakar, Accra, Nairobi, and Pretoria.

And today I'm proud to welcome all of you, the third class of Mandela Fellows. More than 40,000 people applied. You're our biggest class yet—double the size of the previous year—1,000 YALI Fellows strong. And for the last 6 weeks, you've been studying and learning at some of America's best universities. Today you're not just Mandela Fellows, but you're also Hawkeyes and Buckeyes and Sun Devils. We've got some Fighting Irish here. We've got our first class of Energy Fellows, young people at UC Davis studying new ways to promote clean energy and fight climate change.

And not only have you've been studying and learning, but you've also immersed yourself in American culture. You've looked at sites from our Nation's founding in Boston and Philadelphia. You've visited the 9/11 Memorial in New York. You've spent time in my hometown of Chicago. So you've got a taste of America, which for some of you apparently included something called lobster ice cream, which I've never tasted myself, but, I have to admit, sounds terrible. [*Laughter*] But that's okay. You were very brave. [*Laughter*]

You've also gotten a front row seat on the fascinating roller-coaster process of American democracy because you're here during election season. And I hope you've buckled your

seatbelts—[*laughter*]—but it actually has been a good lesson and a reminder, democracy is hard everywhere, even in the world's oldest continuous democracy. It's always challenging, and it is always messy. But as you're watching our election, I want you to know that one of the things that leaders in Washington agree on, on both sides of the political aisle—Republicans and Democrats—is the importance of a strong American partnership with the nations and peoples of Africa. That's true today. I'm confident it will be true for years to come.

So we're going to keep standing with you. America is going to keep standing with activists like Geline Fuko of Tanzania. All right? Geline is a lawyer and human rights activist. A few years ago, she thought people in Tanzania should be able to use their mobile phones to read their Constitution, so she went out and designed Tanzania's first—[*applause*]—she designed Tanzania's first database of constitutional resources, opening up her Government to more of her people so they could understand their law and their rights and their responsibilities. So thank you so much, Geline, for the great work.

We're going to keep standing with social entrepreneurs like Awa Caba of Senegal. [*Applause*] Whoa! Where is Awa? Where, where? You're over here.

So who was this guy who jumped up? [*Laughter*] He's what you call your hype man. [*Laughter*] He was hyping you up. [*Laughter*]

So Awa cofounded a tech hub to offer free training for women in coding and IT skills. And she also started an e-commerce platform to help Senegalese women take their products, whether it's cosmetics or fruits or jams, to the market and to the world. Because Awa knows that when our women succeed, our countries succeed. So thank you, Awa, for the good work.

We're going to keep standing with strivers like Mamba Francisco of Angola. Where's Mamba?

Mamba is his own hype man. [*Laughter*] So, 2 years ago, he wanted to be a Mandela Fellow, but he didn't qualify because he didn't speak English. So he buckled down, he studied, he learned. And he's here today helping other young people from Angola read and write and make it to college. So thank you. Good job.

And finally, we'll stand together in memory of John Paul Usman. As many of you know, John Paul was a bright young leader from Nigeria who inspired people around the world with his work for peace. Tragically, he lost his life earlier this summer in a hiking accident, and I know you're showing solidarity with the green ribbons that some of you are wearing. Like you, I have faith that John Paul's legacy of building peace and fighting for children's rights will live on, not just in Nigeria, but in all those he inspired in your countries back home and here in the United States.

Because this is a two-way street. For all the experiences that you're gaining here in the United States, we're learning from you. We're energized by your passion. We're learning from your perspectives. And that's why this year for the first time, Americans travel to Africa to visit Mandela Fellows in their home communities so that Americans can learn about development and community building and more from Africans. And even more Americans will participate in this exchange next year. It's also why I'm excited to announce new support from the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the U.S. African Development Foundation, and the Citi Foundation to provide even more Africans with grants and professional opportunities. Give them a big round of applause for their support.

So these partnerships don't just change the lives of young people like you, they're also energizing our countries and shaping our world. We've created programs like this not just in Africa, but in Southeast Asia, in the Americas, in Europe. So you're a part of a huge and growing network of the next generation of leaders around the world. And while I'm going to leave it up to historians to decide my overall legacy—[*laughter*]—one of the things that I'm really proud of is my partnership with young people like you, because all of you inspire me.

So, years from now when you're running a big business or doing a great nonprofit or leading your country as a President or a Prime Minister or a Minister of Finance or something, my

hope is that you can look back and you will keep drawing from the strength and the experience that you've gotten here.

I hope that you'll remember those of us who believed in your potential. And I hope, as a consequence, you then give back to the people who are coming up behind you, because that's how we keep making progress together across oceans and across generations. So, as you do that, you should know that you'll always have a partner and friend in the United States of America. I could not be prouder of all of you and the great work that you've done.

I want to once again thank our outstanding institutions, our universities that have been hosting you. We're very, very proud of their great work.

And so, with that, now what I want to do is open it up for questions. I know that some people are watching on the YALI network online. So hello, everybody. Over the past week, they've been sending in questions over Facebook, so we're actually going to start with one of those. And we've got a YALI alum here to read our first question, Steve Zita. Where are you, Steve? There you are. You're going to read our first question. Go ahead, Steve.

Culture+ Cofounder Steve Mbuku Zita. Thank you very much, sir. By the way, you just said that people might wonder if you and Emmanuel were cousins. I just wanted to say that in this room, we're all brothers. And you're one of us.

The President. Although, I have to say that at this point, I'm probably an uncle. [*Laughter*] I wish I could say I was a brother or a cousin, but now I've got some gray hair. [*Laughter*] So you've got to call me Uncle.

Go ahead.

2008–2009 Recession/Syria/South Sudan/Terrorism

Mr. Zita. Yes, sir. So thank you very much. I'm Steve Zita from DRC. I'm a 2015 alum. I was at the University of Texas at Austin. [*Applause*] There they are.

And as you know, the YALI network is a huge pool of about 250,000 people. So we couldn't all be here. Unfortunately, I think we might not fit in the room.

And our first question comes from Charles Stembo, from Zambia, who wanted to know, "What has been the most challenging issue you've had to handle since you've become President of the United States? And also, what will be your last message as a President, of course, to the young people across the globe?"

The President. Well, I've had my share of tough issues. The issue that had the greatest magnitude was the issue I faced when I first came into office, and that was that the world economy was in the midst of an unprecedented financial crisis that was then spilling over into the broader economy. And the growth and trade and the entire financial system was contracting at a pace that we hadn't seen since the 1930s, since the Great Depression.

And so the series of actions that we had to take very quickly—to strengthen our banks, to coordinate internationally to unlock the financial system, to make sure that people did not engage in protectionist behavior, to resuscitate our auto industry, to put people back to work, to make sure that we didn't get a further downward spiral, to stabilize the housing market here—that was important not just for the United States, but that was important internationally because we're such a big engine for economic growth. And we're still suffering from some of the scars from that great recession that we had in 2007, 2008. But overall, we averted the worst of the crisis, and we were able to stabilize the situation so that the world could start growing again. And that means jobs and opportunity and prosperity for a lot of people.

Probably, the most frustrating challenge that I've had on an ongoing basis typically involves conflicts outside of the United States. Syria is the toughest example. But the conflicts that we continue to see in South Sudan, for example, where after years of fighting and millions of people dead, finally, there was the opportunity to create an independent country of South Sudan. And yet now, within South Sudan, there is still conflict between the two countries—or between two factions. Those are very challenging, because the United States, on the one hand,

cannot police and govern every spot in the world. On the other hand, people look to us to have a positive influence. And when—and our goal has been consistently to try to bring people together so that they can sit down and resolve issues politically rather than through violence.

It is a source of ongoing, daily frustration for me that we have not been able to stop some of these conflicts. One of the things that we've seen in the world today is a shift. It used to be that you had these big wars between great powers. Now, so often, the greatest suffering arises out of either ethnic conflict or sectarian conflict or states that are unstable. And the consequences for ordinary people in those countries are enormous. And in some ways, it's harder to stop those kinds of conflicts than it is simply to defeat an army that is clearly identified.

And the challenge of terrorist networks, which is been an ongoing project of ours and many of our partners around the world is tied up with this issue. Because when you have regional conflicts and young people are displaced and they are without education and they are without prospects and they're without hope, then the possibilities of them being recruited into an organization like ISIL or Al Qaida or Boko Haram, even if it's just a tiny, small percentage, is obviously going to be higher than if people are given opportunity and there's stability in their lives.

So the one thing that I know is that the way we're going to solve these problems is not in isolation, but by having people of good will from across regions, across continents working together. And that begins with many of the young people like you around the world who are trying to do the right thing. So, good. All right, next.

Oh, by the way, I always go boy, girl, boy, girl here to make sure things are equal. [*Laughter*] That was a young man who asked that question, right? So it's a lady's turn. Go ahead, right there. [*Laughter*] Here, you've got a microphone.

Sudan/Human Rights

Q. Hi, thank you for the chance, Mr. President of the United States. Okay. [*Laughter*] I work in international advocacy.

The President. What's your name?

Q. My name is Samreen Alkhair. I'm from Sudan. I'm a cofounder of something called the Sudanese Human Rights Initiative. I go work in international advocacy a lot, and we meet representatives from your Government, and they play a big role influencing the resolutions that come—[*inaudible*]—in Sudan, which part they will be. So I really want to understand how the United States stands, because we have sanctions, and sometimes, I feel they're not enough. So I want to see in the international relations what the situation of the United States and how can they help to empower young people like us and to be heard and to be in roundtables to help and developing democracy in the country. And that's the—[*inaudible*].

The President. Good. Excellent. Well, Sudan is an example of some of what I was talking about earlier. I mean, there's a history in Darfur and other parts of the country of enormous conflict internal to Sudan. And our goal when we—oops, uh-oh, sorry, guys. [*Laughter*] I'm tearing up the stage here. [*Laughter*]

The—our goal when we put together a package of sanctions is not to punish the people of that country, but is rather to make sure that we can exert some leverage so that the country is more responsive to the needs of the people; that they are more prepared to open up government to peaceful concerns and people who are trying to organize around human rights or democracy or so forth. The pressure that we apply is not always enough to actually entirely change the practices inside those countries. And sometimes, let's face it, there are countries that are very resentful and suggest, "Why don't you mind your own business?" Right? Their attitude is, "Who is America to tell us what to do when you yourselves have your own problems inside your country?"

And my response is that America has to have some humility in recognizing that we have our

own issues; that ultimately, whether it's people in Cuba or people in Sudan or people in other parts of the world where there are challenges around human rights, that ultimately, it's going to be up to the people themselves in those countries to determine their fate.

But I do believe that there are certain principles that apply everywhere. I believe that governments should follow the law and not be arbitrary. I believe that every individual has certain rights: to speak freely and to practice their own faith freely and to assemble peacefully to petition their government. I believe that women should be treated equally and if you come from a country in which it is traditional to beat women or not give them an education or engage in genital mutilation, then you should change your traditions because those are bad practices.

And so I do think it is important for us to stand up for those principles, recognizing that we're not perfect, that we need to listen to criticism just like other countries do, and also recognize that even as we may sanction a country, for example, we also need to engage with them so that there becomes the opportunity for dialogue and, hopefully, we can have some positive influence.

Now, there are going to be times where—and I've said this before—where the United States is standing up for human rights, but the country that we're dealing with also is a partner on national security issues. And so we have to balance the needs for our security interests and having diplomatic relations with that country while still applying some pressure. And I think that sometimes people view this as hypocritical: Why aren't you always putting pressure on every country? If a country is doing some bad things to its people, you should have no dealings with them at all. And I will tell you that that's a luxury for people who are outside of government to be able to say that. But when you're inside of government, then you have to try to balance, okay, I'm going to engage with this Government; we're going to talk to this Government. We'll meet with them, and we will be honest with them about our differences even as we're working with them on some of the things that we agree on.

And hopefully, over time, this makes a difference; it has some impact. Our hope is, is that Sudan, over time, is more responsive to the basic principles that we've discussed. That by engaging with them—sometimes around regional conflicts where we have common interests or around antiterrorism efforts—that the opportunities for dialogue improve the prospects for human rights.

But ultimately, it's going to depend on the courage and the conviction of people like you—people inside of Sudan or inside of any of your countries—to be able to bring about change in a peaceful fashion. All right? But we're very proud of you, so keep up your good work.

All right. It's a guy's turn. That man in the corner right there. Go ahead. No, no, this one right here. You, yes. Right there. Go ahead.

Democratic Republic of the Congo/African Development/Media Portrayals of Africa

Q. Thanks very much, Mr. President. I need, first of all—if you can allow me—to ask to my Fellows, all of us, if you can just stand up and thank again once more the President Obama.

The President. Oh, you don't need to do that. That's fine. Thank you.

Q. Thanks very much. I appreciate you too much. I'm Christian Mapendano from Congo. And first of all, I would like to thank you because you have given me the opportunity to know something about America. I've noticed that America is not perfect. Even our countries are not perfect. But I'm a journalist, and we have used media to destroy our Africa, to destroy our countries. Today, all they know about Africa, it's poverty, it's hunger, it's malnutrition. Although what I know—I'm speaking like a Congolese—Congo that I love too much.

My country has got many natural resources. And it's a victim of this wealth, of this richness, because powerful countries have used this to destroy our people, to bring war in our countries, to bring armed groups in our countries. And people are being poorer and poorer every

day, and countries which are making armed weapons keep on improving, keep on developing, and this is not good.

So I'm going to ask a favor from you. The first one is that you are going to leave the White House, I think, by November so——

The President. January, but that's okay. [*Laughter*]

Q. Yes. That's good. It will be in January. So I'll ask you one favor. First of all, if you can be a mentor to our leaders, political leaders, as soon as you are going to leave the White House. Please be a mentor to our African leaders because you are an African American to change this continent.

The President. All right.

Q. And the second one favor—the second favor. I'll need a really a special picture with you. [*Laughter*] Thanks very much, President. [*Laughter*]

The President. [*Laughter*] All right. So this is as good a time as any to let you know that after I'm done, I'm going to shake everybody's hands. [*Applause*] No, no, no, wait. Wait, wait, wait—when I say everybody, I don't mean literally everybody. [*Laughter*] I'm going to—Because there are a thousand of you, I can't shake everybody, but——

Audience members. Yes, you can! [*Laughter*] Yes, you can! Yes, you can!

The President. No, no, no. No! I've got another job I've got to do. [*Laughter*] But here's what I cannot do is take selfies, so—because then, I'll be here for the next 4 hours. It won't work. So no, you can't get your picture, I'm sorry.

But let me address your broader question. The Congo is a good example of a country with, as you said, enormous natural resources and a terrible history of abuse during colonialism, of conflict. As you said, weapons that are not made in the Congo are—pour into the Congo as part of other people's agenda.

And so you both have enormous opportunities, but enormous challenges. But a couple of things I would say. Number one, even though it's important to know this history of what happened during colonial times in the Congo and what happened—subsequent during efforts of independence, and the way that other countries from the outside have meddled in ways that were not helpful to the people there, it is also important for every country to at some point say, it is now our responsibility. Even if we have an unjust history, now it is our responsibility, and we can't use the past as an excuse for some of the problems that we have today. And that's true everywhere.

So you have to be mindful of your history, because if you weren't mindful of your history then suddenly, you'd think, "Wow, what's wrong with us?" And in fact, there's reasons why a country like the Congo has had so many problems. But it can't be an excuse to then just sit back and say it's somebody else's problem or it's somebody else's fault. And I—that is a very important principle, I think, for every country on the continent.

We know the history of Africa. But now the question is, what's the new history that we're going to write? All right? What are the next chapters that we're going to write?

In terms of the media portrayals of Africa, I think you're correct that the United States sometimes only sees Africa in terms of stereotypes. It's either the Wild Life Channel and its beautiful safaris, or it's poverty and war. And too often, Americans just don't realize there are a lot of people who are just going to work every day. [*Laughter*] And they do wear clothes, it's true—[*laughter*]—and raising families and getting an education and creating businesses.

So, since you're a journalist, one of your goals should be to help tell Africa's story. And the good news is that because of the power of the Internet—and it used to be that in order to make a film, you had to have millions of dollars and cameras and this—now, you take out your phone, or you have a small camcorder, and you can produce content that immediately is reaching millions of people. So you can tell your own stories in a way that you could not before.

And I would encourage all of you, no matter whether you're in business or in politics or working for an NGO, to think about, how are you telling a story about Africa and its possibilities? Because the platform now exists for more

and more people to understand the enormous potential and the good news that's taking place in Africa, not just the bad news. Okay.

It's a woman's turn. I don't want to neglect everybody here in the—right here in the back. This young lady in the purple here. Go ahead.

Work-Family Balance/Accountability in Government/Freedom of the Press

Q. Thank you, sir. My name is Juby Peacock. I'm from Botswana. Yes. I want to ask a question about balance and responsibility. Yes. I've watched how you have led in your Presidency with your wife Michelle Obama, with your family life in the public squares, and how you've managed to have balance between your public office and your home. And I believe charity begins in the home. And I've admired that about America, that your democracy is so open. You are investigated before you get into power and when you are in power.

The President. Yes.

Q. How important is it for the young people here today to understand that it's important when you are in public office to run your family well, to take care of your wife or your husband and your children? Also, that it's very important for us to hold each other accountable. If you are a ruler, not to engage in greed or nepotism or corruption, and also us to hold them accountable for what they are doing? Thank you.

The President. Well, I think that's a great question. I—well, let me separate out the two questions. Because one question is about holding leaders accountable in their public lives and how they do their jobs. And the other question is really a more personal question about maintaining balance in your life.

With respect to the personal question, what I would say would be that maintaining balance, having a strong partnership with your wife or husband, raising children who are kind and useful and strong and generous and all of the things that my wonderful daughters are—that really is its own reward.

The truth is, we've had some very great leaders who did not always have great personal lives. And I'm not actually somebody who believes that if you go into public office, that your personal lives—I mean, unless you're committing crimes or things like that—that that is necessarily the best measure. Because we've also had people who were wonderful fathers and great husbands who were bad leaders. So the two things don't always align.

For me, the reason that it's been useful for me to maintain that balance is because I think it's grounded me. It's given me a sense of perspective. It's allowed me during the course of my Presidency, when things aren't going so well, to remember that I have this beautiful family and this wonderful wife.

And the—and when things are going very well, it's good to go home, and then my wife teases me about how I left my shoes in the middle of the living room. [*Laughter*] Or my girls think what I am talking about over dinner is boring. And that brings me down to Earth, right? And so it's been good for me to maintain perspective in my work.

But ultimately, I do that—and for very selfish reasons—it's for my own rewards. Because the one thing I'm almost positive about—in fact, not only am I almost, I am positive that if I'm lucky enough to live to a ripe old age and I'm on my deathbed and I'm thinking back on my life, I won't be remembering some speech I gave or some law I signed. I'll be remembering holding hands with my—one of my daughters and walking them to a park; that that will be the thing that is most precious for me. So that's on the private side.

Now, on the public side, what I would say is, is that although not perfect, the United States is actually pretty good about holding its leaders accountable. Part of that has to do with freedom of the press. Part of it has to do with our separation of powers so that it's not one person in charge of everything, but even the President of the United States is subject to the Constitution. That Constitution is interpreted by a Supreme Court. If I want to pass a budget, it has to go through Congress. Even if I get everything through the Federal level, there are still States and cities that have their own perspective. You have a private sector. So power is dis-

persed not just in one big man, but across the society.

And I think that is very good. Now, it's frustrating sometimes, I won't lie. There are times where the press—right now I'm at the end of my Presidency, so the press is kind of feeling a little sentimental. And they think, oh, he's gotten old. Look at him. We've beat him up. And so—[*laughter*]. Now, let's focus on the new guys coming in.

But there have been times where I thought the press was very unfair, and I'd open up the newspapers and I'd go, what? And I'd start arguing. But there have also been times where the press investigated something, and I thought, you know what, this is a problem. And the United States Government, you have—I have 2 million people who work in the Federal Government. You know, if—we have a budget of over a trillion dollars. It's the largest organization on Earth. So there are going to be times where Government is screwing up. And the fact that the press is there to ask questions and to expose problems does make me work harder. It focuses me on, that is a problem.

And too often, in too many countries around the world, the attitude of the people in charge is, I want to shut up the criticism instead of fixing the problem. And that is not good for the people, and in the end, it's not good for the President, the Prime Minister, those in charge. Because over time, what happens is, you get—you just hear what you want to hear.

It's as if you had a doctor who, whatever the checkup, he just kept on telling you, "You're fine." And then suddenly, you start having a big growth in your neck. [*Laughter*] He said: "Aw, don't worry about it. It's fine." [*Laughter*] And you start limping, and it's, like, "Aw, if—you're healthy, you're great." And you never get well.

So I think the importance of accountability and transparency in government is the starting point for any society improving. And now, that also means that the press has responsibilities to make sure that it's accurate, to make sure that it doesn't just chase whatever is the most sensational, but tries to be thoughtful and present as best it can, a fair view of what's happening. But in the end, I'd rather have the press err on the side of freedom—even if sometimes, it's a little inaccurate—than to have the person who is governing the country making decisions about who is wrong and who is right and who can say what and who can publish what. Because that's the path to not just dictatorship, but it's also the path to not fixing the real problems that exist. All right?

Okay. It's a gentleman's turn. Yes, the—I'll call on this guy right here. So I need a translator; yes, my sign language is not so good. We need a sign——

[*At this point, an audience member communicated in sign language, and his question was translated by an interpreter as follows.*]

Education/Role of Government in Free Enterprise System

Q. Thank you so much. So you're definitely a visionary and with Martin Luther King. I can relate to you—I can relate the both of you together. So, in America, a lot of countries—sorry, there's a lot of States. And there's a lot of countries that we are coming from that have diversity. There are visas that have to be filled out. There's a lottery system that you have to go through. And so, while everyone is coming to the U.S.—you know, there's a medical system. There's—there are people who are seeking to get their Ph.D.'s, to get their doctorates, to get a lot of educational advances. There's a lot of educational advances that people are having. And so, while people are coming here, they're seeing that they're not able to——

[*The interpreter spoke as follows.*]

Interpreter. Sorry, we're translating multiple languages.

[*The audience member continued to sign, and the remainder of his question was translated by a second interpreter as follows.*]

Q. ——for example, becoming a physician or becoming an engineer. That individuals that come from Africa can, in fact, achieve their dreams. They can come to the United States,

and they have a limitless option of educational tracks that they can take to have good work and not necessarily depend specifically on the profession to do it for them. And the Government can be an aid in that process to help them excel in their profession.

And also, the second part of my question: There are many objectives and goals, but right now, as you are coming to the end of your Presidency, how do you feel as though you can personally continue the initiatives that you've set forth for Africa since you are coming so quickly to the end of your Presidency? What are your plans to continue those objectives?

The President. Okay. Good. So—oh, I'm sorry——

Q. I have a supplementary third part, I'm so sorry. [*Laughter*]

The President. But we don't want too long a question.

[*The audience member continued to sign, but no translation was provided.*]

The President. All right, can I answer? No. Good.

So, first of all, I thought that was very cool that you had, like, kind of a three-way translation going on there. [*Laughter*] So you had the sign language, that was then signed back, that was then translated to English. So there was just a whole bunch of really smart people communicating.

But if I understood the first part of your question, look, one of the great achievements of the United States is our university system, which, it really is unparalleled anywhere in the world. It's not just one or two great universities. We have hundreds of great universities. And we have an entire community college system that allows people to get practical training as well, even if they don't get a 4-year degree, and that is a huge advantage. Because those countries that are investing in human capital, that are training people, are going to do better—that's the most valuable resource. There are countries that have natural resources, but if their people are not valued as the more important resource, those countries will not succeed.

Yesterday I had a state dinner with the Prime Minister of Singapore. Singapore is a tiny, little island, just a little spot, a little dot on a map. But it has one of the most wealthy, well-educated, advanced populations in the world, not because they've got oil or because they've got precious gems, but because their people have been educated and they can thrive in this new knowledge-based society. So it's a huge advantage for us.

Now, I think in each of your countries, it is really important for your current leadership and many of you who will be future leaders to make sure that, first and foremost, that educational infrastructure is in place. And it has be to be provided for everybody—not just boys, but girls—and it's got to start early because you can't leave half of your population behind and expect that you're going to succeed.

And by the way, let's face it, the mothers, even in enlightened marriages like mine, are probably doing more in terms of teaching children than the fathers are. So, if you're not teaching the mother that means the child also is not getting taught. And so the first is to create the infrastructure where people are learning. But I think one of the points you're making also though, is we have some countries where people are getting degrees, but because of the rules and the regulations and the policies are not allowing for enough entrepreneurship and enough private sector growth, then you have people who are educated, but they're frustrated because they can't find good work.

And so it's not enough just to educate a population. You then also have to have rules in place where if you want to start a business, you don't have to pay a bribe. Or you don't have to hire somebody's cousin who then is not going to show up on the job, but expects to get paid. Or if you want to get electricity installed, you have to wait for 5 months to get a line into your office. Right?

So all the rules, the regulations, the laws, the structures that are in place to encourage development and growth—that has to be combined with the education in order for those young people who now have talent to be able to move forward. And too often, what I've seen in a lot

of African countries—and this is not unique to Africa, you see it in a lot of other places—there's this perspective of, okay, you get an education, and then you get a slot in some government office somewhere. And if you don't get one of those slots, then that's it, you don't have any—there's no opportunity. And I am a strong believer that government—strong, effective, transparent government—is a precondition for a market-based economy. You can't have one without the other.

But what is also true is that if every job is a government job, then there's going to come a point where you're not going to be able to accommodate all the talents of your people. So you have to be able to create a private sector, a marketplace, where people who have a new idea, who have a new product or service, they can go out there and they can create something. And if you don't have that, then you're going to frustrate the vision and the ambitions of too many young people in your country.

So I think the—America in the past has done this well. Our big problem here in this country is sometimes we forget how we became so wealthy in the first place. And you start hearing arguments about, "Oh, we don't want to pay taxes to fund the universities," or "We don't want to pay taxes to maintain our roads properly, because why should I have to invest in society. I made it on my own." And we forget that, well, the reason that you had this opportunity to go work at Google or to go work at General Motors or to go work at IBM had to do with a lot of investments that were made in science and research and roads and ports and all the infrastructure that helps preserve the ability of people who want to operate effectively in the marketplace to be able to make it.

And I always tell people who are antigovernment in the United States, try going to a country where the government doesn't work. [*Laughter*] And you'll see that you actually want a good government. It's a useful thing to have, but it's not enough on its own if you also don't have then the ability of people in the private sector to succeed.

All right. It's a woman's turn. Let's see. The guys, you can sit down. Guys, it's not your turn. [*Laughter*] This young lady right here. Yes. No, not you. I said this young lady right here. [*Laughter*] Come on, man.

[*An audience member shouted out the name of a university.*]

Event staffer. Excuse me.

The President. What's your name?

English Language Instruction

Q. My name is Folaké Diane. I come from Benin, and thank you, Mr. President, for giving us this opportunity. When you were speaking, you spoke about leaving people behind. I want to use that same phrase to mention here that we have left a lot of young and dynamic other people behind to come here in the United States. And what has been the barrier? I want to pay tribute to every Fellows who come from every African countries, but I want to pay a special tribute to all Fellows who have come from Mali, Senegal, Niger, Côte d'Ivoire, and Benin.

The challenge is twofold, Mr. President. Not only do we have to qualify as good leaders, we also have to qualify as good English speakers. But we have people back home who cannot speak this language. Mr. President, you are at the end of your term. I would like you to partner with all these countries—Mali, Benin, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Mozambique—to help us build English clubs, English language centers for young people to be able to be more efficient and seize this opportunity. Thank you very much.

The President. Okay. [*Applause*] Hey! I think you make an excellent point. Obviously, we have people who are here from Francophile countries or from Portuguese-speaking countries, but what we also want to make sure of is that everybody can participate. And for a range of historical reasons, English has become in some ways a lingua franca. And frankly, I wish we as Americans did a better job of learning other languages. One of the things about being a big country, we've always kind of felt like, oh, we don't need it. But now, in an

interconnected world, the more languages we speak, the better.

So I think it's excellent practical advice. And we will work with our team to think about how we can incorporate English learning into our program. So thank you very much for that news I can use. [*Laughter*]

All right, let's see. We've got a gentleman—this guy right here, yes, in the cool hat.

Event staffer. Which——

The President. Well, you both have cool hats, but I was calling on him. [*Laughter*]

Event staffer This gentleman?

The President. Right here. Go ahead.

Public Service

Q. Thank you so much, Mr. President. I want to just start by saying thank you so much for this opportunity. I think you've done a great job as the President, and you inspire a lot of us young African leaders. Also, I want to say that back home where I come from—my name is Fola Aina by the way. I'm Nigerian. Where I come from, there are lots of bottlenecks and barriers to the youths participating in politics because politics we see as a platform that offers change we desire to implement. So what is your advice, being in the White House for 8 years, coming as a young enthusiast to the White House and, after 8 years, the things you've seen from where you came from and now—what advice do you have for young Africans who aspire to run for office? And what do you think they can do to make a difference even when they get to political office? That's one.

And secondly, this is just to use this opportunity to say a big shout-out, my wife admires you a lot. And I promised that if I get a chance to talk to you, I would say hi on her behalf.

The President. Okay. So you see, he's keeping balance. [*Laughter*] Making sure he can go back home and say, "Hey, honey, I've"—[*laughter*]—"I was looking after you."

People here in the States—we have a White House Interns Program, and I often talk to young people after they complete their internship at the White House. And they ask me a similar question: What advice would I give for people who are interested in public service and politics? And obviously, each country is different. Some countries are more challenging because democratic policies are still not so deeply entrenched. Oftentimes, there's not as much turnover in government because people once they get in, they don't want to leave. In part, by the way, that also has to do with the lack of opportunity in the private sector.

One of the reasons why you want to have a country that has a good, strong government, but also a private sector is if you don't have a good, strong private sector, then the temptation for people to stay in power in government because that's the only way to make a living or to succeed, you know, that becomes a strong temptation. And that then leads to the temptation to corruption or to suppress opposition or to not have honest elections because you're hanging on, because if you lose, you've got nothing, right?

And one of the good things about the United States is that, look, you run for office, if you lose, yes, there's other ways of making a living. It's not a tragedy. [*Laughter*] And, no—and it's interesting, I mean, there were times where—during my political career, there were times where I thought, you know what, this isn't going all that well. And I remember when I ran for the United States Senate. I had already lost a race to be in Congress. I had been in the State senate for 8 years. It was putting enormous strains on my family because I was traveling a lot. And I thought to myself, you know what, this is it. If I don't win this U.S. Senate race, I'm getting out of politics. I'm going to go do something else. And I was comfortable with that view.

It also meant that once I became President—and people have talked about, for example, in my first term, when I was trying to get the health care law passed, and the politics of it were not going well, and people were very angry and oftentimes misinformed about what it would do. I decided, look, even if this means that I don't get a second term, I'm going to go ahead and do it anyway. And part of the reason was because I said, if I lose, I'll be upset, it'll be a little embarrassing, but I'll be okay, and

there's no point in me being in office if I can't actually do something with the office.

So the—now, that leads me to the main advice that I would have for those of you who are interested in politics or government. I always say to young people: Worry less about what you want to be and worry more about what you want to do. Now—because those are two different things.

I think one of the problems we get sometimes here in Washington is, we have people—not everybody and maybe not even the majority—but there are people here who they had in their mind very early on, "I want to be a Congressman." And then, they're doing everything they can to be a Congressman, and then, once they become a Congressman, they don't know why they're a Congressman. [*Laughter*] All they know is, they want to stay a Congressman. [*Laughter*]

And so this is true not just in politics, I think this is true in business as well. The most successful businesspeople I know, they don't start off saying, "I want to be rich." What they say is, "I want to invent the personal computer." And then it turns out, wow, Steve Jobs or Hewlett and Packard or Bill Gates—you guys did a really good job, and it just so happened that it made you really rich. But there was a passion about trying to get something done. It's certainly true in politics.

So, if you want to be in politics, what I—my advice to you would be, why? What is it that you want to do? Do you want to provide a good education to young people? Do you want to alleviate poverty? Do you want to make sure that everybody has health care? Do you want to promote peace between ethnic groups in your country? Do you want to preserve the environment? And whatever it is that you want to do, start doing it. Because you don't have to have an office to do that. You can start a program to help young women in your village get an education. You can decide in whatever part of Nigeria you're from that you're going to go back and try to promote health and wealth—wellness programs for young people. And the experience you get from actually doing these things then will inform the nature of why you might want to go into politics.

First of all, it may turn out that you are making such a difference and having such an impact without going into politics that you decide, I don't want to do that. I want to keep on building what I'm doing. If you do decide to go into politics, you will have not only the experience, but also the credibility with the people you want to represent because they've seen you actually do something useful.

And the last point I would make is, politics is a little bit like going into acting or being a musician. And what I mean by that is, you can be really talented, but maybe the timing is off. Maybe you didn't get the lucky break. And so you can't guarantee that you're going to be elected or successful in a particular office.

I mean, when you think about me being President of the United States, it was quite unlikely. And I still remember—I ran for the Senate. I won my primary, but I still had a general election. And then I was selected to speak at the Democratic National Convention, and—this is in 2004. And the fact that John Kerry picked me to speak was sort of accidental. And I gave a pretty good speech so—[*applause*]. No, no—but, wait, wait. That—so the day after the speech, my name's everywhere, and I'm on television. And people are saying, "Wow, who is this guy, Obama?" [*Laughter*] "That was wonderful. We're really impressed. And he's got a future. And maybe someday he's going to run for President," and et cetera.

And I told my friend—because we were still in Boston—and we were walking, and there were these huge crowds, and everybody is wanting to shake my hand, and I said, "I'm no more smarter today than I was yesterday." [*Laughter*] I mean, you know, I didn't suddenly magically become so much better than I was when I was just a State senator. Some of it had to do with just chance. It was luck.

So you don't have control completely over luck, over fate, over chance. But you do have control over being useful and getting good work done in your communities. So stay focused on that. And then, if you stay focused on that, then maybe success comes in politics. But if it doesn't, you will still be able to wake up

every morning and say, you know what, I'm making a difference. I'm doing good work.

So, all right. I've only got time for one question. Yes, I've been working hard up here. One question. So the young lady in the hijab, right there. Yes. Right there, go ahead. Where are you from?

Q. I'm from Sudan.

The President. Oh, no, no, no. I can't do another Sudanese.

Q. Oh!

The President. I love you, though, but I have to be fair to—I've got to make sure every country—countries get a chance. I can't hear. I can't hear. Wait, wait, wait, I can't hear. Cameroon. Okay, go ahead. All right, right here, from Cameroon. But I will shake your hand, though, because I feel it was unfair for me to call on you. So you can come up to the front. I'll make sure to shake your hand.

All right, go ahead.

The President's Young Leaders Initiatives

Q. Thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity. I'm Lilian. I'm from Cameroon. Thank you.

Some of us come from areas where our governments don't really integrate what we do here in the U.S.—governments that are a little bit, maybe, hostile, the environment hostile. What are some of the strategies you're putting in place to make sure that this—our governments integrate all that we have done here so that we can better impact our environment? Thank you.

The President. Good. Well, we've been talking about this with the State Department. Because one of my goals is to make sure that the program continues after I leave.

And I think that we have a great interest in both promoting this program, but then, also working with your governments so that they see this is an enormous opportunity for them. What we want to let them know is that the talent that all of you represent is going to be the future of your countries. And so take advantage.

We'll partner with you, but also with your governments, to work on the projects that you've designed to make sure that you have a, sort of, a sponsor that is kind of looking out for you. I think the fact that we've created these four regional centers and this network and that our Embassies in each of your countries are aware of what you've done will be helpful to you.

But in the end of the day, as I've said before, you're going to be the ones who actually have to take advantage of the opportunities. I mean, there's going to be some things we can do, but at the end of the day, your vision will have to be won by you and by your fellow countrymen and women.

So part of the reason why I love this program is, this isn't a matter of what America is doing for you, this is us being partners, but mainly seeing what you can do yourselves to change, transform, and build your countries.

And I don't want to be—look, I want to be honest with you. There are over 50 countries represented here. It represents a wide spectrum. Some of you are going to go back and what you're doing is welcomed. Some of you will go back and not so much. Depending on the kinds of things that you want to do—maybe if you're just focused on public health—you'll get less resistance. If you are interested in human rights or democracy, you might get more resistance. There are some countries where you being active and speaking out publicly can be dangerous. There are some places where it's welcomed. There are some places where freedom of the press is observed, other places where it is viewed as objectionable.

I can't—and America cannot—solve all those problems. And if I were to promise that, I would not be telling the truth. But what I can do is to make sure that the program continues, that the network continues to get built, and that the State Department is engaged with your countries explaining why what you represent is so important to the continent.

And what I can also commit to is, is that even after I am President that this will be a program that I continue to participate in and work with because it's something that I'm very, very proud of.

So thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:28 p.m. at the Omni Shoreham Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to 2016 Mandela Washington Fellow Emmanuel Odama; Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore; William H. Gates III, founder, technology adviser, and board member, Microsoft Corp.; and Secretary of State John F. Kerry, in his capacity as the 2004 Democratic Presidential nominee. He also referred to Executive Order 13734, which is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume; and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

The President's News Conference at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia
August 4, 2016

The President. Good afternoon, everybody. I just met again with my National Security Council on the campaign to destroy ISIL. I want to thank Secretary Carter and Chairman Dunford, who just returned from meetings with our coalition partners in the Middle East, for hosting us and for their continued leadership of our men and women in uniform.

I last updated the American people on our campaign in June, shortly after the horrifying attack in Orlando. In the weeks since, we've continued to be relentless in our fight against ISIL, and on the ground in Syria and Iraq, ISIL continues to lose territory. Tragically, however, we have also seen that ISIL still has the ability to direct and inspire attacks. So we've seen terrible bombings in Iraq and in Jordan, in Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Afghanistan; attacks on an Istanbul airport, a restaurant in Bangladesh, Bastille Day celebrations and a church in France, and a music festival in Germany. In fact, the decline of ISIL in Syria and Iraq appears to be causing it to shift to tactics that we've seen before: an even greater emphasis on encouraging high-profile terrorist attacks, including in the United States.

As always, our military, diplomatic, intelligence, homeland security, and law enforcement professionals are working around the clock—with other countries and with communities here at home—to share information and prevent such attacks. And over the years, they've prevented many. But as we've seen, it is still very difficult to detect and prevent lone actors or small cells of terrorists who are determined to kill the innocent and are willing to die. And that's why, as we discussed today, we're going to keep going after ISIL aggressively across every front of this campaign.

Our air campaign continues to hammer ISIL targets: more than 14,000 strikes so far, more than 100,000 sorties, including those hitting the ISIL core in Raqqa and in Mosul. And in stark contrast to ISIL, which uses civilians as human shields, America's Armed Forces will continue to do everything in our power to avoid civilian casualties. With our extraordinary technology, we're conducting the most precise air campaign in history. After all, it is the innocent civilians of Syria and Iraq who are suffering the most and who need to be saved from ISIL's terror. And so, when there are allegations of civilian casualties, we take them very seriously. We work to find the facts, to be transparent, and to hold ourselves accountable for doing better in the future.

We continue to take out senior ISIL leaders and commanders. This includes ISIL's deputy minister of war, Basim Muhammad al-Bajari; a top commander in Mosul, Hatim Talib al-Hamduni; and in yet another significant loss for ISIL, its minister of war, Omar al-Shishani. None of ISIL's leaders are safe, and we are going to keep going after them.

On the ground in Iraq, local forces keep pushing ISIL back. In a major success, Iraqi forces, with coalition support, finally liberated Fallujah. Now they're clearing ISIL fighters from more areas up the Euphrates Valley, and Iraqi forces retook the strategic airbase at Qayyarah, just 40 miles from Mosul, now the last major ISIL stronghold in Iraq. Given this success, the additional 560 U.S. support personnel that I ordered to Iraq last month will help turn

this base into a logistical hub and launch pad for Iraqi forces as they push into Mosul.

Meanwhile, in Syria, a coalition of local forces—backed by our special operations forces and airstrikes—continues to take the fight to ISIL as well. The coalition is fighting its way into the town of Manbij, a gateway for ISIL fighters coming in and terrorists heading out to attack Europe, which is why ISIL is fighting hard to hold it. As ISIL is beaten back, we're gaining vast amounts of intelligence—thousands of documents, thumb drives, digital files—which we will use to keep destroying ISIL's networks and stop foreign fighters. We also continue to intensify our efforts against Al Qaida in Syria, which—no matter what name it calls itself—cannot be allowed to maintain a safe haven to train and plot attacks against us.

I do want to step back and note the broader progress that has been made in this campaign so far. Two years ago, ISIL was racing across Iraq, to the outskirts of Baghdad itself, and to many observers, ISIL looked invincible. Since then, in Iraq, ISIL has lost at the Mosul Dam, at Tikrit, at Baiji, at Sinjar, at Ramadi, at Hit, at Rutbah, and now Fallujah. In Syria, ISIL has lost at Kobani and Tal Abyad and the Tishrin Dam and al-Shaddadi. ISIL has lost territory across vast stretches of the border with Turkey and almost all major transit routes into Raqqa. And in both Iraq and Syria, ISIL has not been able to reclaim any significant territory that they have lost.

So I want to repeat: ISIL has not had a major successful offensive operation in either Syria or Iraq in a full year. Even ISIL's leaders know they're going to keep losing. In their message to followers, they're increasingly acknowledging that they may lose Mosul and Raqqa. And ISIL is right, they will lose them. And we'll keep hitting them and pushing them back and driving them out until they do. In other words, ISIL turns out not to be invincible. They are, in fact, inevitably going to be defeated.

But we do recognize, at the same time, that the situation is complex and this cannot be solved by military force alone. That's why, last month, the United States and countries around the world pledged more than $2 billion in new funds to help Iraqis stabilize and rebuild their communities. It's why we're working with Iraq so that the military campaign to liberate Mosul is matched with humanitarian and political efforts to protect civilians and promote inclusive governance and development so ISIL cannot return by exploiting divisions or new grievances.

In Syria, as I've repeatedly said, defeating ISIL and Al Qaida requires an end to the civil war and the Asad regime's brutality against the Syrian people, which pushes people into the arms of extremists. The regime and its allies continue to violate the cessation of hostilities, including with vicious attacks on defenseless civilians, medieval sieges against cities like Aleppo, and blocking food from reaching families that are starving. It is deplorable. And the depravity of the Syrian regime has rightly earned the condemnation of the world.

Russia's direct involvement in these actions over the last several weeks raises very serious questions about their commitment to pulling the situation back from the brink. The U.S. remains prepared to work with Russia to try to reduce the violence and strengthen our efforts against ISIL and Al Qaida in Syria. But so far, Russia has failed to take the necessary steps. Given the deteriorating situation, it is time for Russia to show that it is serious about pursuing these objectives.

Beyond Syria and Iraq, we'll keep working with allies and partners to go after ISIL wherever it tries to spread. At the request of Libya's Government of National Accord, we are conducting strikes in support of Government-aligned forces as they fight to retake Sirte from ISIL, and we will continue to support the Government's efforts to secure their country.

In Afghanistan, one of the reasons that I decided to largely maintain our current force posture was so that we could keep eliminating ISIL's presence there, and we delivered another blow last month when we took out a top ISIL leader in Afghanistan, Umar Khalifa.

Finally, it should be clear by now—and no one knows this better than our military leaders—that even as we need to crush ISIL on the battlefield, their military defeat will not be

enough. So long as their twisted ideology persists and drives people to violence, then groups like ISIL will keep emerging and the international community will continue to be at risk in getting sucked into the kind of global Whac-A-Mole where we're always reacting to the latest threat or lone actor. And that's why we're also working to counter violent extremism more broadly, including the social, economic, and political factors that help fuel groups like ISIL and Al Qaida in the first place.

Nothing will do more to discredit ISIL and its phony claims to being a caliphate than when it loses its base in Raqqa and in Mosul. And we're going to keep working with partners—including Muslim countries and communities, especially online—to expose ISIL for what they are: murderers who kill innocent people, including Muslim families and children as they break their Ramadan fast, and who set off bombs in Medina near the Prophet's Mosque, one of the holiest sites in Islam.

Moreover, we refuse to let terrorists and voices of division undermine the unity and the values of diversity and pluralism that keep our Nation strong. One of the reasons that America's Armed Forces are the best in the world is because we draw on the skills and the talents of all of our citizens, from all backgrounds and faiths, including patriotic Muslim Americans who risk and give their lives for our freedom. And I think the entire world was inspired this past Sunday, when Muslims across France joined their Catholic neighbors at Mass and, in a moving display of solidarity, prayed together. The greeting they extended to each other has to be the message we echo in all of our countries and all of our communities: Peace be with you, and also with you.

Now, before I take some questions, I also want to say a few words on another topic. As our public health experts have been warning for some time, we are now seeing the first locally transmitted cases of the Zika virus by mosquitoes in the continental United States. This was predicted and predictable. So far, we've seen 15 cases in the Miami area. We're taking this extremely seriously. Our CDC experts are on the ground working shoulder to shoulder with Florida health authorities. There's a very aggressive effort underway to control mosquitoes there. And pregnant women have been urged to stay away from the particular neighborhood that we're focused on. We'll keep working as one team—Federal, State, and local—to try to slow and limit the spread of the virus.

I do want to be very clear though: Our public health experts do not expect to see the kind of widespread outbreaks of Zika here that we've seen in Brazil or in Puerto Rico. The kind of mosquitoes that are most likely to carry Zika are limited to certain regions of our country. But we cannot be complacent because we do expect to see more Zika cases. And even though the symptoms for most people are mild—many may never even know that they have it—we've seen that the complications for pregnant women and their babies can be severe. So I, again, want to encourage every American to learn what they can do to help stop Zika by going to CDC.gov.

In addition, Congress needs to do its job. Fighting Zika costs money. Helping Puerto Rico deal with its Zika crisis costs money. Research into new vaccines—and by the way, NIH just announced the first clinical trials in humans—that costs money. And that's why my administration proposed an urgent request for more funding back in February. Not only did the Republican-led Congress not pass our request, they worked to cut it. And then they left for summer recess without passing any new funds for the fight against Zika.

Meanwhile, our experts at the NIH and CDC—the folks on the frontlines—have been doing their best and making do by moving funds from other areas. But now the money that we need to fight Zika is rapidly running out. The situation is getting critical. For instance, without sufficient funding, NIH critical trials—clinical trials and the possibilities of a vaccine, which is well within reach, could be delayed.

So this is not the time for politics. More than 40 U.S. servicemembers have now contracted Zika overseas. In 50 U.S. States, we know of more than 1,800 cases of Zika connected to

travel to infected areas, and that includes nearly 500 pregnant women. Zika is now present in almost every part of Puerto Rico. And now we have the first local transmission in Florida, and there will certainly be more.

And meanwhile, Congress is on a summer recess. A lot of folks talk about protecting Americans from threats. Well, Zika is a serious threat to Americans—especially babies—right now. So, once again, I want to urge the American people to call their Members of Congress and tell them to do their job: Deal with this threat, help protect the American people from Zika.

With that, I'm going to take some questions. I'm going to start with someone who just assumed the second most powerful office in the land—Jeff Mason—[*laughter*]—the new Correspondents' Association president—also from Reuters.

Jeff.

Q. Thank you, sir. Hardly powerful. And happy birthday.

The President. Thank you very much.

Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) Terrorist Organization/U.S. Counterterrorism Strategy/Security Briefings for Presidential Nominees

Q. As Islamic State loses territory, you and other officials have said that it is becoming a more traditional terrorist group. Are you satisfied that the United States and its allies have shifted strategy sufficiently to address that change?

And secondly, given your comments this week about Donald Trump's volatility and lack of fitness to be President, are you concerned that he will be receiving security briefings about ISIS and other sensitive national security issues?

The President. Okay. I'm never satisfied with our response, because if you're satisfied that means the problem is solved, and it's not. So we just spent a couple hours meeting with my top national security folks to look at what more can be done.

It is absolutely necessary for us to defeat ISIL in Iraq and Syria. It is not sufficient, but it is necessary. Because so long as they have those bases, they can use their propaganda to suggest that somehow there's still some caliphate being born, and that can insinuate itself then in the minds of folks who may be willing to travel there or carry out terrorist attacks. It's also destabilizing for countries in the region at a time when the region is already unstable.

So I am pleased with the progress that we've made on the ground in Iraq and Syria. We're far from freeing Mosul and Raqqa. But what we've shown is, is that when it comes to conventional fights, ISIL can be beaten with partners on the ground so long as they've got the support from coalition forces that we've been providing.

In the meantime, though, you're seeing ISIL carry out external terrorist acts, and they've learned something they've adapted from Al Qaida, which had a much more centralized operation and tried to plan very elaborate attacks. And what ISIL has figured out is that if they can convince a handful of people, or even one person, to carry out an attack on a subway or at a parade or some other public venue and kill scores of people, as opposed to thousands of people, it still creates the kinds of fear and concern that elevates their profile.

So, in some ways, rooting out these networks for smaller, less complicated attacks is tougher, because it doesn't require as many resources on their part or preparation. But it does mean that we've got to do even more to generate the intelligence and to work with our partners in order to degrade those networks.

And the fact is, is that those networks will probably sustain themselves even after ISIL is defeated in Raqqa and Mosul. But what we've learned from our efforts to defeat Al Qaida is that if we stay on it, our intelligence gets better, and we adapt as well. And eventually, we will dismantle these networks also.

This is part of the reason why, however, it is so important for us to keep our eye on the ball and not panic, not succumb to fear. Because ISIL can't defeat the United States of America or our NATO partners. We can defeat ourselves, though, if we make bad decisions. And we have to understand that as painful and as tragic as these attacks are, that we are going to

keep on grinding away, preventing them wherever we can, using a whole-of-Government effort to knock down their propaganda, to disrupt their networks, to take their key operatives off the battlefield, and that eventually, we will win.

But if we start making bad decisions—indiscriminately killing civilians, for example, in some of these areas, instituting offensive religious tests on who can enter the country—those kinds of strategies can end up backfiring. Because in order for us to ultimately win this fight, we cannot frame this as a clash of civilizations between the West and Islam. That plays exactly into the hands of ISIL and the perversions—the perverse interpretations of Islam that they're putting forward.

As far as Mr. Trump, we are going to go by the law, which is that—and in both tradition and the law—that if somebody is the nominee, the Republican nominee for President, they need to get a security briefing so that if they were to win, they are not starting from scratch in terms of being prepared for this office.

And I'm not going to go into details of the nature of the security briefings that both candidates receive. What I will say is that they have been told these are classified briefings. And if they want to be President, they've got to start acting like President, and that means being able to receive these briefings and not spread them around.

Q. Are you worried about that?

The President. Well, I think I've said enough on that.

Mary Bruce [ABC News].

U.S. Release of Frozen Iranian Financial Assets/U.S. Hostage Negotiation Policy/Release of U.S. Citizens Detained in Iran/Iran Nuclear Agreement

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. What is your response to critics who say the $400 million in cash that you sent to Iran was a ransom payment? Was it really simply a pure coincidence that a sum that was—a payment that was held up for almost four decades was suddenly sent at the exact same time that the American prisoners were released? And can you assure the American people that none of that money went to support terrorism?

The President. Okay. The—it's been interesting to watch this story surface. Some of you may recall, we announced these payments in January, many months ago. There wasn't a secret. Right? We announced them to all of you. Josh did a briefing on them. This wasn't some nefarious deal. And at the time, we explained that Iran had pressed a claim before an international tribunal about them recovering money of theirs that we had frozen; that, as a consequence of its working its way through the international tribunal, it was the assessment of our lawyers that we were now at a point where there was significant litigation risk and we could end up costing ourselves billions of dollars. It was their advice and suggestion that we settle. And that's what these payments represent. And it wasn't a secret. We were completely open with everybody about it. And it's interesting to me how suddenly this became a story again. That's point number one.

Point number two: We do not pay ransom for hostages. We've got a number of Americans being held all around the world. And I meet with their families, and it is heartbreaking. And we have stood up an entire section of interagency experts who devote all their time to working with these families to get these Americans out.

But those families know that we have a policy that we don't pay ransom. And the notion that we would somehow start now in this high-profile way and announce it to the world—even as we're looking into the faces of other hostage families—families whose loved ones are being held hostage and say to them that we don't pay ransom—defies logic. So that's point number two. We do not pay ransom. We didn't here. And we don't—we won't in the future, precisely because if we did, then we would start encouraging Americans to be targeted, much in the same way that some countries that do pay ransom end up having a lot more of their citizens being taken by various groups.

Point number three is that the timing of this was, in fact, dictated by the fact that as a consequence of us negotiating around the nuclear

deal, we actually had diplomatic negotiations and conversations with Iran for the first time in several decades. So the issue is not so much that it was a coincidence as it is that we were able to have a direct discussion.

John Kerry could meet with the Foreign Minister, which meant that our ability to clear accounts on a number of different issues at the same time converged. And it was important for us to take advantage of that opportunity both to deal with this litigation risk that had been raised—it was important for us to make sure that we finished the job on the Iran nuclear deal—and since we were in a conversation with them, it was important for us to be able to push them hard in getting these Americans out.

And let me make a final point on this. It's now been well over a year since the agreement with Iran to stop its nuclear program was signed. And by all accounts, it has worked exactly the way we said it was going to work. You will recall that there were all these horror stories about how Iran was going to cheat and this wasn't going to work and Iran was going to get $150 billion to finance terrorism and all these kinds of scenarios, and none of them have come to pass.

And it's not just the assessment of our intelligence community, it's the assessment of the Israeli military and intelligence community—the country that was most opposed to this deal—that acknowledges this has been a game changer and that Iran has abided by the deal and that they no longer have the sort of short-term breakout capacity that would allow them to develop nuclear weapons.

So what I'm interested in is, if there's some news to be made, why not have some of these folks who were predicting disaster say, you know what, this thing actually worked? [*Laughter*] Now, that would be a shock. [*Laughter*] That would be impressive, if some of these folks who had said the sky is falling suddenly said, you know what, we were wrong, and we are glad that Iran no longer has the capacity to break out in short term and develop a nuclear weapon. But of course, that wasn't going to happen.

Instead, what we have is the manufacturing of outrage in a story that we disclosed in January. And the only bit of news that is relevant on this is the fact that we paid cash, which brings me to my last point. The reason that we had to give them cash is precisely because we are so strict in maintaining sanctions and we do not have a banking relationship with Iran that we couldn't send them a check and we could not wire the money.

And it is not at all clear to me why it is that cash, as opposed to a check or a wire transfer, has made this into a news story. Maybe because it kind of feels like some spy novel or some crime novel because cash was exchanged. The reason cash was exchanged is because we don't have a banking relationship with Iran, which is precisely part of the pressure that we were able to apply to them so that they would ship a whole bunch of nuclear material out and close down a bunch of facilities that, as I remember, 2 years ago, 3 years ago, 5 years ago, was people's top fear and priority, that we make sure Iran doesn't have breakout nuclear capacity. They don't. This worked.

Josh Lederman [Associated Press].

2016 Presidential Election/U.S. Electoral System

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Repeatedly now, Donald Trump has said that this election will be rigged against him, challenging really the core foundation of our democratic system. Can you promise the American people that this election will be conducted in a fair way? And are you worried that comments like his could erode the public's faith in the outcome of the election? And if he does win, given that you have just declared him "unfit," what will you say to the American people?

The President. Well, at the end of the day, it's the American people's decision. I have one vote. I have the same vote you do. I have the vote that all the voters who are eligible all across the country have. I've offered my opinion, but ultimately, it's the American people's decision to make collectively. And if somebody wins the election and they are President, then my constitutional responsibility is to peacefully

transfer power to that individual and do everything I can to help them succeed.

It is—I don't even really know where to start on answering this question. [*Laughter*] Of course, the elections will not be rigged. What does that mean? [*Laughter*] The Federal Government doesn't run the election process. States and cities and communities all across the country, they are the ones who set up the voting systems and the voting booths. And if Mr. Trump is suggesting that there is a conspiracy theory that is being propagated across the country, including in places like Texas, where typically it's not Democrats who are in charge of voting booths, that's ridiculous. That doesn't make any sense. And I don't think anybody would take that seriously.

Now, we do take seriously—as we always do—our responsibilities to monitor and preserve the integrity of the voting process. If we see signs that a voting machine or system is vulnerable to hacking, then we inform those local authorities who are running the elections that they need to be careful. If we see jurisdictions that are violating Federal laws in terms of equal access and aren't providing ramps for disabled voters or are discriminating in some fashion or are otherwise violating civil rights laws, then the Justice Department will come in and take care of that.

But this will be an election like every other election. And I think all of us at some points in our lives have played sports or maybe just played in a schoolyard or a sandbox. And sometimes, folks, if they lose, they start complaining that they got cheated. But I've never heard of somebody complaining about being cheated before the game was over or before the score is even tallied. So my suggestion would be go out there and try to win the election.

If Mr. Trump is up 10 or 15 points on election day and ends up losing, then maybe he can raise some questions. [*Laughter*] That doesn't seem to be the case at the moment.

Barbara Starr [CNN].

2016 Presidential Election/Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) Terrorist Organization/U.S. Counterterrorism Strategy

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. On the question of ISIS expansion that you've been talking about, because you see them expanding around the world, because you see them trying to inspire attacks, what is your current level of concern about the homeland? You talked about the protection measures, but what is your assessment about the possibility—your own intelligence advisers suggest it's possible—about the direct ISIS threat to Americans? And if I may follow up, somewhat along the same lines, what is your assessment today as you stand here about whether Donald Trump can be trusted with America's nuclear weapons?

The President. On your second question—and I'll sort of address this to any additional Trump questions—[*laughter*]—I would ask all of you to just make your own judgment. I've made this point already multiple times. Just listen to what Mr. Trump has to say and make your own judgment with respect to how confident you feel about his ability to manage things like our nuclear triad.

Q. With respect, sir, it suggests that you're not confident.

The President. Well, as I recall, I just answered a question about this a couple days ago, and I thought I made myself pretty clear. And I don't want to just keep on repeating it or a variation on it. I obviously have a very strong opinion about the two candidates who are running here. One is very positive, and one is not so much. [*Laughter*] And I think that you will just hear—any further questions that are directed at this subject, I think you'll hear pretty much variations on the same theme.

What I can say is that this is serious business. And the person who is in the Oval Office and who our Secretary of Defense and our Joint Chiefs of Staff and our outstanding men and women in uniform report to, they are counting on somebody who has the temperament and good judgment to be able to make decisions to keep America safe. And that

should be very much on the minds of voters when they go into the voting booth in November.

In terms of the threat that ISIL poses to the homeland, I think it is serious. We take it seriously. And as I said earlier, precisely because they are less concerned about big, spectacular 9/11-style attacks, because they've seen the degree of attention they can get with smaller scale attacks using small arms or assault rifles or, in the case of Nice, France, a truck, the possibility of either a lone actor or a small cell carrying out an attack that kills people is real.

And that's why our intelligence and law enforcement and military officials are working around the clock to try to anticipate potential attacks, to obtain the threads of people who might be vulnerable to brainwashing by ISIL. We are constrained here in the United States to carry out this work in a way that's consistent with our laws and presumptions of innocence. And the fact that we prevent a lot of these attacks as effectively as we do, without a lot of fanfare and abiding by our law, is a testament to the incredible work that these folks are doing. They work really hard at it. But it is always a risk.

And I—some of you may have read the article in the New York Times today—I guess it came out last night online—about this individual in Germany who had confessed and given himself up and then explained his knowledge of how ISIL's networks worked. There was a paragraph in there that some may have caught, which we don't know for a fact that this is true, but according to this reporting, the individual indicated that ISIL recognizes it's harder to get its operatives into the United States, but the fact that we have what he referred to as "open gun laws" meant that anybody, as long as they didn't have a criminal record that barred them from purchase, could go in and buy weapons, that made, sort of, a homegrown extremist strategy more attractive to them. And those are the hardest to stop because, by definition, if somebody doesn't have a record, if it's not triggering something, it means that anticipating their actions becomes that much more difficult.

And this is why the military strategy that we have in Syria and Iraq is necessary, but it is not sufficient. We have to do a better job of disrupting networks. And those networks are more active in Europe than they are here. But we don't know what we don't know, and so it's conceivable that there are some networks here that could be activated. But we also have to get to the messaging that can reach a troubled individual over the Internet and do a better job of disrupting that. And what I've told my team is that, although we've been working on this now for 5, 6, 7 years, we've got to put more resources into it. This is—can't be an afterthought. It's something that we have to really focus on.

This is also why how we work with the Muslim American community, the values that we affirm about their patriotism and their sacrifice and our fellow feeling with them is so important. One of the reasons that we don't have networks and cells that are as active here as they are in certain parts of Europe is because the Muslim American community in this country is extraordinarily patriotic and largely successful and fights in our military and serves as our doctors and our nurses and there are communities in which they are raising their kids with love of country and a rejection of violence. And that has to be affirmed consistently. And when—if we screw that up, then we're going to have bigger problems.

Gregory Korte of USA Today. There you go.

Criminal Justice Reform/Presidential Pardons and Commutations

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Yesterday you commuted the sentences of 214 Federal inmates. It was the largest single-day grant of commutations in the history of the American Presidency. So I wanted to ask you a couple of questions about your clemency——

The President. Initiative. Yes.

Q. ——thought process.

One is, you've talked about this as low-level drug offenders who got mandatory minimum sentences, but about a quarter of the commutations you've granted also had firearms offens-

es. Given your overall philosophy on firearms, can you reconcile that for us?

The President. Sure.

Q. And given that previously in your Presidency you had sent a memo to the Office of Pardon Attorney saying there was sort of a predisposition against firearms to be carrying a clemency, why did you change your mind on that?

The President. Good.

Q. Also, the other side of the ledger here is pardons. You've granted more commutations than any President since Calvin Coolidge. You've granted fewer pardons than any two-term President since John Adams. Why is that? Is the focus on commutations taking energy away from pardons, especially since these are—you've talked about second chances; a full pardon would give people a better chance at those second chances.

The President. Good.

Q. And then, finally, just one other thing on pardons. Many of your predecessors in the final days of their Presidency have saved—reserved that for their more politically sensitive pardons.

The President. Yes.

Q. Should we expect you to do that? Or would you rule that out? Thanks.

The President. Okay. No, I appreciate the question, Gregory, because I haven't had a chance to talk about this much and this is an effort that I'm really proud of.

It is my view, shared by Democrats and Republicans alike in many quarters, that as successful as we've been in reducing crime in this country, the extraordinary rate of incarceration of nonviolent offenders has created its own set of problems that are devastating. Entire communities have been ravaged where largely men, but some women, are taken out of those communities. Kids are now growing up without parents. It perpetuates a cycle of poverty and disorder in their lives. It is disproportionately young men of color that are being arrested at higher rates, charged and convicted at higher rates, and imprisoned for longer sentences.

And so, ultimately, the fix on this is criminal justice reform. And I still hold out hope that the bipartisan effort that's taken place in Congress can finish the job and we can have a criminal justice system, at least at the Federal level, that is both smart on crime, effective on crime, but recognizes the need for proportionality in sentencing and the need to rehabilitate those who commit crimes.

But even as that slow process of criminal justice reform goes forward, what I wanted to see is if we could reinvigorate the pardon process and commutation process that had become stalled over the course of several years, partly because it's politically risky. You commute somebody, and they commit a crime, and the politics of it are tough. And everybody remembers the Willie Horton ad.

And so the bias, I think, of my predecessors and, frankly, a number of my advisers early in my Presidency is, be careful about that. But I thought it was very important for us to send a clear message that we believe in the principles behind criminal justice reform even if ultimately we need legislation.

So we have focused more on commutations than we have on pardons. I would argue, Gregory, that by the time I leave office, the number of pardons that we grant will be roughly in line with what other Presidents have done. But standing up this commutations process has required a lot of effort and a lot of energy, and it's not like we've got a new slug of money to do it. So you've got limited resources. The primary job of the Justice Department is to prevent crime and to convict those who have committed crimes and to keep the American people safe. And that means that you've had this extraordinary and Herculean effort by a lot of people inside the Justice Department to go above and beyond what they're doing to also review these petitions that have been taking place. And we've been able to get bar organizations around the country to participate, to kind of screen and help people apply.

And what we've—the main criteria that I've tried to set is, if under today's laws—because there have been changes in how we charge nonviolent drug offenses—if under today's

charges, their sentences would be substantially lower than the charges that they received, if they got a life sentence, but a U.S. attorney or the Justice Department indicates that today they'd be likely to get 20 years and they've already served 25, then what we try to do is to screen through and find those individuals who have paid their debt to society, that have behaved themselves and tried to reform themselves while incarcerated and think—we think have a good chance of being able to use that second chance well.

On the firearms issue, what I've done is to try to screen out folks who seem to have a propensity for violence. And so—and these are just hypotheticals, but there may be a situation where a kid at 18 was a member of a gang, had a firearm, did not use it in the offense that he was charged in, there's no evidence that he used it in any violent offense, it's still a firearms charge in enhancement, but he didn't use it. He's now 48—or 38, 20 years later, and has a unblemished prison record, has gone back to school, gotten his GED, has gone through drug treatment, has the support of the original judge that presided, the support of the U.S. attorney that charged him, support of the warden, has a family that loves him. And in that situation, the fact that he had, 20 years earlier, an enhancement because he had a firearm is different than a situation where somebody has engaged in armed robbery and shot somebody. In those cases, that is still something that I'm concerned about.

Our focus really has been on people who we think were overcharged and people who we do not believe have a propensity towards violence.

And in terms of your last question about sort of last-minute pardons that are granted, the process that I put in place is not going to vary depending on how close I get to the election. So it's going to be reviewed by the Pardon Attorney, it will be reviewed by my White House Counsel, and I'm going to, as best as I can, make these decisions based on the merits, as opposed to political considerations. Okay?

And finally, Jim Miklaszewski is retiring after 30 years at NBC. He has done an outstanding job, mostly covering the Department of Defense. This may be my last press conference here, so I just wanted to thank Jim for the extraordinary career that he's had and the great job that he's done. And he gets the last question.

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

The President. You bet.

Terrorism/U.S. Counterterrorism Strategy

Q. First, back to ISIS and Iraq and Syria, your very own national counterterrorism operation has found that despite all of the decisive defeats that the U.S. and coalition have dealt ISIS on the battlefield, that they've expanded their threat worldwide to include as many as 18 operational bases. In the 6 years you've been dealing, do you feel any personal disappointment that there hasn't been more progress? And in any discussions you've had with the U.S. military and your intelligence agencies, have you come up with any new ideas on how to deal or defeat ISIS?

The President. Every time there is a terrorist attack, I feel disappointment, because I'd like to prevent all of them. And that's true not just when the attacks are in Europe or in the United States. When you read stories about attacks in Lebanon or Iraq or Afghanistan or distant parts of the world that don't get as much attention, they get my attention, because that's somebody's kid and that's somebody's mom and that's somebody who was just going about his business, and mindlessly, senselessly, this person was murdered.

So I haven't gotten numb to it. It bugs me whenever it happens and wherever it happens. And we are constantly pushing ourselves to see, are there additional ideas that we can deploy to defeat this threat?

Now, it is important that we recognize, terrorism as a tactic has been around for a long time. And if you look at the seventies or the eighties or the nineties, there was some terrorist activity somewhere in the world that was brutal. And as much as I would like to say that during my 8-year Presidency, we could have eliminated terrorism completely, it's not surprising that that hasn't happened, and I don't

expect that will happen under the watch of my successors.

I do think that because of our extraordinary efforts, the homeland is significantly safer than it otherwise would be. Now, some—in some ways, this is arguing the counterfactuals, but the attacks we prevent I take great satisfaction in, and I am grateful for the extraordinary work that our teams do. I don't think there's any doubt that had we not destroyed Al Qaida in the FATA that more Americans would have been killed, and we might have seen more attacks like we saw on 9/11. And we have maintained vigilance, recognizing that those threats still remain, those aspirations in the minds of these folks still remain, but it is much harder for them to carry out large-scale attacks like that than it used to be.

What we have seen is that these lower level attacks carried out by fewer operatives or an individual with less sophisticated and less expensive weapons can do real damage. And that, I think, points to the need for us to not just have a military strategy, not just have a traditional counterterrorism strategy that's designed to bust up networks and catch folks before they carry out their attacks—although those still are necessary, and we have to be more and more sophisticated about how we carry those out; it still requires us to have much greater cooperation with our partners around the world—but it points to the fact that we're going to have to do a better job in draining the ideology that is behind these attacks; that right now is emanating largely out of the Middle East and a very small fraction of the Muslim world a perversion of Islam that has taken root and has been turbocharged over the Internet; and that is appealing to even folks who don't necessarily know anything about Islam and aren't even practicing Islam in any serious way, but have all kinds of psychosis and latch on to this as some way of being important and magnifying themselves.

And that's tougher because that involves both changes in geopolitics in places like Syria. It requires cultural changes in regions like the Middle East and North Africa that are going through generational changes and shifts as the old order collapses. It requires psychology and thinking about how do these messages of hate reach individuals and are there ways in which we can intervene ahead of time. And all that work is being done. And we've got the very best people at it, and each day, they're making a difference in saving lives, not just here, but around the world.

But it's a challenge precisely because if you're successful 99 percent of the time, that 1 percent can still mean heartbreak for families. And it's difficult because in a country, let's say, of 300 million people here in the United States, if 99.9 percent of people are immune from this hateful ideology, but one-tenth of 1 percent are susceptible to it, that's a lot of dangerous people running around. And we can't always anticipate them ahead of time because they may not have criminal records. So this is going to be a challenge.

I just want to end on the point that I made earlier. How we react to this is as important as the efforts we take to destroy ISIL, prevent these networks from penetrating. You can't separate those two things out. The reason it's called terrorism, as opposed to just a standard war, is that these are weak enemies that can't match us in conventional power, but what they can do is make us scared. And when it make—and when societies get scared, they can react in ways that undermine the fabric of our society. It makes us weaker and makes us more vulnerable and creates politics that divide us in ways that hurt us over the long term.

And so, if we remain steady and steadfast and vigilant, but also take the long view and maintain perspective and remind ourselves of who we are and what we care about most deeply, and what we cherish and what's good about this country and what's good about the international order and civilization that was built in part because of the sacrifices of our men and women after a 20th century full of world war—if we remember that—then we're going to be okay. But we're still going to see, episodically, these kinds of tragedies, and we're going to have to keep working on it until we make things better. All right?

Q. If I may, Mr. President——

The President. You may, only because this is your retirement.

Q. I was hoping you'd respond——

The President. But I hope it's not too long because——

Q. No, no, it's short——

The President. ——I'm going to be late for my birthday dinner. [*Laughter*]

Q. Oh. Happy birthday, by the way.

The President. Thank you.

Syria/Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. You alluded earlier to the negotiations between the U.S. and Russia over some military-to-military cooperation in Syria against some of the militant forces there, presumably in exchange for whatever Russian influence could be imposed on the Asad regime for a variety of reasons.

The President. Right.

Q. Now, you—I'm sure you're not surprised that some in the military are not supportive of that deal. Some European allies think it would be a deal with the devil. What makes you so confident that you can trust the Russians and Vladimir Putin?

The President. I'm not confident that we can trust the Russians and Vladimir Putin, which is why we have to test whether or not we can get an actual cessation of hostilities that includes an end to the kinds of aerial bombing and civilian death and destruction that we've seen carried out by the Asad regime. And Russia may not be able to get there either because they don't want to or because they don't have sufficient influence over Asad. And that's what we're going to test.

So we go into this without any blinders on. We're very clear that Russia has been willing to support a murderous regime that has—and an individual, in Asad, who has destroyed his country just to cling on to power. What started with peaceful protests has led to a shattering of an entire and pretty advanced society. And so, whenever you're trying to broker any kind of deal with an individual like that or a country like that, you've got to go in there with some skepticism.

On the other hand, if we are able to get a genuine cessation of hostilities that prevents indiscriminate bombing, that protects civilians, that allows humanitarian access and creates some sort of pathway to begin the hard work of political negotiations inside of Syria, then we have to try, because the alternative is a perpetuation of civil war.

I've been wrestling with this now for a lot of years. I am pretty confident that a big chunk of my gray hair comes out of my Syria meetings. [*Laughter*] And there is not a meeting that I don't end by saying, is there something else we could be doing that we haven't thought of. Is there a plan F, G, H that we think would lead to a resolution of this issue so that the Syrian people can put their lives back together again and we can bring peace and relieve the refugee crisis that's taken place? And the options are limited when you have a civil war like this, when you have a ruler who doesn't care about his people, when you've got terrorist organizations that are brutal and would impose their own kind of dictatorship on people, and you have a moderate opposition and ordinary civilians who are often outgunned and outmanned. And that's a very difficult situation to deal with. But we've got to give it a chance.

There are going to be some bottom lines that we expect for us to cooperate with Russia beyond the sort of deconfliction that we're currently doing. And that means restraint on the part of the regime that so far has not been forthcoming.

Early on in this version of the cessation of hostilities, we probably saw some lives saved and some lessening of violence. The violations of this cessation have grown to the point where it just barely exists, particularly up in the northwestern part of the country. So we're going to test and see if we can get something that sticks. And if not, then Russia will have shown itself very clearly to be an irresponsible actor on the world stage that is supporting a murderous regime and will have to be—will have to answer to that on the international stage.

All right? Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 4:49 p.m. in the briefing room. In his remarks, the President referred to Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., USMC; Basim Muhammad Ahmad Sultan al-Bajari and Hatim Talib al-Hamduni, senior ISIL commanders who were killed in a U.S. airstrike in Mosul, Iraq, on June 25; Tarkhan Tayumurazovich Batirashvili, an ISIL senior leader known as Omar al-Shishani; President Bashar al-Asad of Syria; Umar Khalifa, also known as Khalifa Omar Mansoor, a leader of the Tariq Gidar Group who was killed in a U.S. airstrike in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan, on July 9; Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton; Jason Rezaian, Amir Hekmati, Saeed Abedini, Nosratollah Khosravi-Roodsari, and Matthew Trevithick, U.S. citizens released from Iranian custody in January; White House Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest; Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif-Khonsari of Iran; Harry Sarfo, a former member of ISIL serving a 3-year prison sentence in Bremen, Germany, on terrorism charges; Willie Horton, a convicted felon who was sentenced for crimes committed during a weekend furlough program in Massachusetts in 1986; Acting U.S. Pardon Attorney Robert A. Zauzmer; and President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia. He also referred to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Export Control Regulations
August 4, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice, stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13222 in light of the expiration of the Export Administration Act of 1979 is to continue in effect for 1 year beyond August 17, 2016.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President's Weekly Address
August 6, 2016

Every 4 years, our Nation's attention turns to a competition that's as heated as it is historic. People pack arenas and wave flags. Journalists judge every move and overanalyze every misstep. Sometimes we're let down, but more often we're lifted up. And just when we think we've seen it all, we see something happen in a race that we've never seen before.

I'm talking, of course, about the Summer Olympics. This month, Rio is hosting the first-ever Games held in South America, and we're ready to root on Team U.S.A. We're excited to see who will inspire us this time, whose speed will remind us of Jesse Owens, whose feats will remind us of Bob Beamon's amazing jump? Which young American will leave us awestruck, the way a teenager named Kerri Strug did when she stuck that landing, and when another kid named Cassius Clay gave the world its first glimpse of greatness? Who will match

Mary Lou Retton's perfection or pull off an upset like Rulon Gardner's or dominate like the Dream Team?

That's why we watch. And we have a lot to look forward to this year. Team U.S.A. reminds the world why America always sets the gold standard: We're a nation of immigrants that finds strength in our diversity and unity in our national pride.

Our athletes hail from 46 States, DC, and the Virgin Islands. Our team boasts the most women who have ever competed for any nation at any Olympic Games. It includes Active Duty members of our military and our veterans. We've got basketball players who stand nearly 7 feet tall and a gymnast who's 4-foot-8. And Team U.S.A. spans generations: a few athletes who are almost as old as I am and one born just a year before my younger daughter.

Our roster includes a gymnast from Texas who's so trailblazing, they named a flip after her, a young woman who persevered through a tough childhood in Flint, Michigan, to become the first American woman to win gold in the boxing ring, and a fencing champion from suburban Jersey who'll become the first American Olympian to wear a hijab while competing. And on our Paralympic team, we're honored to be represented by a Navy veteran who lost his sight while serving in Afghanistan and continues to show us what courage looks like every time he jumps in the pool.

When you watch these Games, remember that it's about so much more than the moments going by in a flash. Think about the countless hours these athletes put in, knowing it could mean the difference in a split-second victory that earns them a lifetime of pride and gives us enduring memories. It's about the character it takes to train your heart out, even when no one's watching. Just hard work, focus, and a dream. That's the Olympic spirit, and it's the American spirit too.

In our Olympians, we recognize that no one accomplishes greatness alone. Even solo athletes have a coach beside them and a country behind them. In a season of intense politics, let's cherish this opportunity to come together around one flag. In a time of challenge around the world, let's appreciate the peaceful competition and sportsmanship we'll see, the hugs and high-fives, and the empathy and understanding between rivals who know we share a common humanity. Let's honor the courage it takes, not only to cross the finish line first, but merely to stand in the starting blocks. And let's see in ourselves the example they set: proving that no matter where you're from, with determination and discipline, there's nothing you can't achieve.

That idea, that you can succeed no matter where you're from, is especially true this year. We'll cheer on athletes on the first-ever Olympic Refugee Team: ten competitors from the Congo, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Syria who personify endurance.

To all of our Olympic and Paralympic athletes wearing the red, white, and blue, know that your country couldn't be prouder of you. We admire all the work you've done to get to Rio and everything you'll do there. Thank you for showing the world the best of America. And know that when you get up on that podium, we'll be singing the national anthem—and maybe even shedding a tear—right alongside you.

Now go bring home the gold!

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 11:50 a.m. on August 5 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on August 6. In the address, the President referred to long jumper Bob Beamon, gymnasts Kerri Strug and Mary Lou Retton, and wrestler Rulon Gardner, former U.S. Olympic Team members who won Gold Medals in 1968, 1996, 1984, and 2000, respectively; gymnast Simone Biles, table tennis player Kanak Jha, boxer Claressa Shields, and fencer Ibtihaj Muhammad, members, 2016 U.S. Olympic Team; and swimmer Brad Snyder, member, 2016 U.S. Paralympic Team. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 5, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on August 6. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Designation of David S. Johanson as Vice Chair of the United States International Trade Commission
August 11, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with the provisions of 19 U.S.C. 1330(c)(1), this is to notify the Congress that I have designated David S. Johanson as Vice Chair of the United States International Trade Commission for the term expiring June 16, 2018.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate.

Statement on International Youth Day
August 12, 2016

Today, on International Youth Day, we celebrate the potential and power of young people to shape the future of our increasingly interconnected world. With over half of the global population under the age of 30, young generations will find the solutions to some of our toughest global challenges.

The United States is committed to providing opportunity for young people to ensure they are not only the leaders of tomorrow, but also change agents today. Whether it is ensuring boys and girls have equal access to education, building skills to strengthen youth leadership in civil society, business, and academia, or providing a young entrepreneur with the capital and network to grow a startup, we are investing in the potential of the next generation. Through our Young Leaders Initiatives, nearly half a million young people are working together to learn from one another and effect change in their communities.

Youth are often the voices at the forefront of advocating for societies to advance and improve, whether on issues of human rights, technology, climate change, or health care. From the activist in Nigeria fighting for disability rights to the human rights advocate in Egypt defending the fundamental freedoms of all Egyptians to speech, assembly, and association, and the Paraguayan manufacturing low-cost prosthetics, young people see a world of endless possibility and are not waiting to take action to do what is right.

Today we commemorate the energetic spirit of young people worldwide and their ability to improve the future of humanity.

The President's Weekly Address
August 13, 2016

Hi, everybody. One of the most urgent challenges of our time is climate change. We know that 2015 surpassed 2014 as the warmest year on record, and 2016 is on pace to be even hotter.

When I took office, I said this was something we couldn't kick down the road any longer, that our children's future depended on our action. So we've got to work, and over the past 7½ years, we've made ambitious investments in clean energy and ambitious reductions in our carbon emissions. We've multiplied wind power threefold. We've multiplied solar power more than thirtyfold. In parts of America, these clean power sources are finally cheaper than dirtier, conventional power. And carbon pollution from our energy sector is at its lowest level in 25 years, even as we're continuing to grow our economy.

We've invested in energy efficiency, and we're slashing carbon emissions from appliances,

homes, and businesses, saving families money on their energy bills. We're reforming how we manage Federal coal resources, which supply roughly 40 percent of America's coal. We've set the first-ever national standards limiting the amount of carbon pollution power plants can release into the sky.

We also set standards to increase the distance our cars and light trucks can go on a gallon of gas every year through 2025. And they're working. At a time when we've seen auto sales surge, manufacturers are innovating and bringing new technology to market faster than expected. Over 100 cars, SUVs, and pickup trucks on the market today already meet our vehicles standards ahead of schedule. And we've seen a boom in the plug-in electric vehicle market, with more models, lower battery costs, and more than 16,000 charging stations.

But we're not done yet. In the weeks and months ahead, we'll release a second round of fuel efficiency standards for heavy-duty vehicles. We'll take steps to meet the goal we set with Canada and Mexico to achieve 50-percent clean power across North America by 2025. And we'll continue to protect our lands and waters so that our kids and grandkids can enjoy our most beautiful spaces for generations.

There's still much more to do. But there's no doubt that America has become a global leader in the fight against climate change. Last year, that leadership helped us bring nearly 200 nations together in Paris around the most ambitious agreement in history to save the one planet we've got. That's not something to tear up, it's something to build upon. And if we keep pushing and leading the world in the right direction, there's no doubt that, together, we can leave a better, cleaner, safer future for our children.

Thanks, everybody. And have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 11:50 a.m. on August 5 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on August 13. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 12, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on August 13. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Fundraiser in Chilmark, Massachusetts

August 15, 2016

Well, with an introduction like that I should just stop now. [*Laughter*] Carol, thank you so much, and Hank and to the entire Goldberg clan. There are all these gorgeous Goldberg kids running around somewhere. And what a wonderful time to be here.

I see some really wonderful old friends who have been with us through the incredible journey, and I see some new friends. I do remember that event at Eli Segal's. And Eli was such a great American and had provided such great service to the country, and obviously, he's missed. But in some ways, his spirit lives on through all of us. A lot of the work that we've pursued during the course of this administration reflects the values that he worked on so valiantly for so many years.

I'm here because we've got an election. And although Michelle is very strict about me actually taking a vacation when I get a vacation, she gave me a special dispensation for this evening because she understands, just as all of you understand, how important this is.

It's important because we have made extraordinary progress over the last 8 years on a whole range of issues. The economy, which was on the verge of collapse when I came into office, is, by almost every measure, better than it was 8 years ago. Unemployment has been slashed by more than half. Incomes are up. Wages have begun to go up. We have seen 20 million people get health insurance that didn't have it before. We have doubled our production of clean energy. We are as close to energy-

independent as we've ever been. We are seeing record graduation rates in high school, and college enrollment rates.

There's a lot of good news out there. And I could not be prouder of the part that our administration played in helping the American people rebound from what was an extraordinarily difficult time. But what is also true is we've still got a lot of work to do. Our job is not finished. There are still too many people out there who, if they have a job, don't make enough money to get beyond the worries of paying their bills at the end of the month. There are still people who don't have health insurance, not because we haven't tried, but because you have Governors who have been resistant or a Congress that has not wanted to work with us to close those final gaps in coverage that are so necessary.

Despite the extraordinary work that we've done in mobilizing 200 nations to, for the first time, tackle climate change in a comprehensive, aggressive way, we've still got a long way to go before we're out of the woods on that one. And that is a genuine existential threat that we all face and, more importantly, our children and our grandchildren face.

We still have too much violence in our society. There are still conflicts not just in the Middle East, but around the world. And given the rapidity of change, the pace of change that's taken place, it is absolutely critical that we have a capable, visionary, hard-working, diligent, smart, tenacious leader in the Oval Office. And that's Hillary Clinton. That's who she is.

Now, a lot of you were at the convention in Philadelphia, and so you heard me and Joe Biden and Michelle and others make the case, and you heard Hillary make the case herself. I'm not going to belabor it. I want to spend most of my time with questions.

The main thing I want to emphasize is that this is somebody who I know and I have worked alongside for many years. And look, I'm a Democrat, and so it's fair to say that whoever the Democratic nominee was I would want to get behind them. But I don't display the kinds of enthusiasm and energy and commitment to Hillary's candidacy just because of the fact that we belong to the same political party.

When I say that she knows what she's talking about, it's because I have seen her do the work. When I talk about her work ethic, it's because I've watched her travel around the world and, at a breathless pace, manage a whole range of conflicts and open up opportunities that have resulted in American national security interests being served. When I tell you that I've seen how she works not just with me, but with her staff and people below her in a way that is full of integrity and seriousness and good humor, it's something that I've witnessed on a day-to-day basis.

And as I said at the convention, you don't know ahead of time how you're going to turn out as President. You don't—you figure, "I seem to know what I'm talking about"—[*laughter*]—"I think I have a good sense of what's involved." But until you sit at that desk and you're making life-and-death decisions and you're deploying young men and women to war, or you're having to avert a crisis that can affect millions or, in some cases, billions of lives, you don't know how you're going to respond.

But I will tell you that I have as good a guess when it comes to how Hillary will respond as I would of anybody's, because I've seen her under really tough-pressure situations. And that's what's needed right now.

What I also know is the passion that she feels for making sure that ordinary people in this country get a hand up, get a break, that somebody's fighting for them. Now, she's not always the flashiest. She's not always the person who's going to give you the big stemwinder. But she is the person who's going to do the work. And whether it's her advocacy for children, or her advocacy for health care, or her advocacy on behalf of equal pay or making sure that we've got childcare for families that need it, she hasn't just talked the talk, she's walked the walk for decades. And my grandmother used to tell me, you want to judge how somebody is going to do, look at what they've done. [*Laughter*] And she's done the work.

So look, I know this is not an audience where I need to make a hard sell. [*Laughter*] To some degree, I had you at hello—[*laughter*]—when it comes to voting for Hillary. What I do want to emphasize is needing a sense of urgency and finishing the job of getting her elected. And you notice I haven't said much about her opponent. [*Laughter*] Frankly, I'm tired of talking about her opponent. I don't have to make the case against her opponent because every time he talks he makes the case against his own candidacy.

But what I do know is that this has been an unpredictable election season, but—not only because of anxieties and concerns that the American people have, but also because of the changing nature of the media and voting patterns. There's still a lot of uncertainty out there. And if we are not running scared until the day after the election, we are going to be making a grave mistake.

And Democrats are interesting creatures. We tend to veer from full-fledged freakout and "the world is ending and everything is terrible," which—I had conversations with some of you about 3 months ago, and it was "the world was ending"—[*laughter*]—to "it's going to be fine" and "who do you think she's going to appoint for Commerce Secretary?" [*Laughter*] And what I'd like us to do is veer somewhere in between those two extremes. [*Laughter*]

If we do our job, then Hillary will be elected President of the United States. But if we do not do our jobs, then it's still possible for her to lose. And when I say "do our jobs," what I mean is we are going to have to continue to be engaged. We are going to continue to have to write checks. We are going to continue to have to make phone calls and rally people behind her candidacy. We are still going to have to fight what has been a unrelenting negative campaign against her that has made a dent in the opinion of people even who are inclined to vote for her.

So we've got to be aggressive in our campaigning for 80 days. And that's not a lot. But when you think about the stakes, there's nothing more important. This is a group that has been extraordinarily fortunate. By definition, if you are here, you've had a blessed life, and your kids have been bequeathed and your grandchildren have been bequeathed extraordinary good fortune. But as fortunate as you are, if we have a society of growing inequality, if we have a world where oceans are rising and droughts and famines are common occurrences, and millions of people are being displaced, and refugees are trying to find refuge someplace and crossing oceans and dying because they have no choice, all of us will be poorer for it. This will not be the kind of world that we want for our kids and our grandkids.

And to invest 80 days to make sure that we at least have a leader in the White House who understands that—not because they're going to be perfect, not because Hillary is going to solve every problem, just like I wasn't perfect and I wasn't able to solve every problem—but at least somebody who understands what's required and every single day is waking up and making best efforts to do it, if we're not willing to invest 80 days to make sure that happens, then shame on us.

So we've got to work. And I don't want to hear it about whether "I'm not sufficiently inspired" or "we've got this in the bag" or "I've got other things to do." You've got to work for 80 days. And I'm glad to see some young people here. I hope you volunteer and get involved in the campaign and do your part. And if you do, then I continue to be, as I said in Philadelphia, extraordinarily optimistic about this greatest Nation on Earth and the prospects for our future.

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:06 p.m. at the residence of Henry H. and Carol Brown Goldberg. In his remarks, he referred to Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton; and Republican Presidential nominee Donald J. Trump. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

The President's Weekly Address
August 20, 2016

Hi, everybody. Earlier this summer, Michelle, Malia, Sasha, and I headed west to the national parks at Carlsbad Caverns and Yosemite. And I've got to say, it was a breath of fresh air. We explored hundreds of feet of underground, standing beneath dripping stalactites in New Mexico. We hiked up a misty trail next to a waterfall in California. And I even took a few pictures of my own, which I thought were pretty good.

But the truth is, no camera—especially one with me behind it—can fully capture the beauty and majesty of America's national parks. From Glacier and Denali to Gettysburg and Seneca Falls, our more than 400 parks and other sites capture our history and our sense of wonder. As FDR once said: "There is nothing so American as our national parks. . . . The fundamental idea behind the parks . . . is that the country belongs to the people."

This month, we're celebrating the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. And I want to encourage all of you to "Find Your Park" so that you and your family can experience these sacred places too. If you're a military family, you can even get in free through Michelle and Jill Biden's Joining Forces initiative. And if you've got a fourth grader in your family, you can get a free pass too, by going to everykidinapark.org.

I hope you do. Because all across the country, the National Park Service is preparing for a big year. We're revitalizing a grove of giant Sequoias in Yosemite, repairing the Lincoln Memorial, and enhancing the iconic entrance to our first national park at Yellowstone.

As President, I'm proud to have built upon America's tradition of conservation. We've protected more than 265 million acres of public lands and waters, more than any administration in history. We've recovered endangered wildlife species and restored vulnerable ecosystems. We've designated new monuments to Cesar Chavez in California and Pullman porters in Chicago and the folks who stood up for equality at Stonewall in New York to better reflect the full history of our Nation. And we've got more work to do to preserve our lands, culture, and history. So we're not done yet.

As we look ahead, the threat of climate change means that protecting our public lands and waters is more important than ever. Rising temperatures could mean no more glaciers in Glacier National Park, no more Joshua trees in Joshua Tree National Park. Rising seas could destroy vital ecosystems in the Everglades, even threaten Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty.

So, in the coming years and decades, we have to have the foresight and the faith in our future to do what it takes to protect our parks and protect our planet for generations to come. Because these parks belong to all of us. And they're worth celebrating, not just this year, but every year.

Thanks, everybody. Have a great weekend. And see you in the parks.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 11:45 a.m. on July 29 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on August 20. In the address, the President referred to Jill T. Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 19, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on August 20. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Following a Tour of Flood Damage and an Exchange With Reporters in Zachary, Louisiana
August 23, 2016

The President. Well, to begin with, I just want to say thank you to the outstanding officials behind me who have been on the ground, working 24/7 since this flood happened. It begins with outstanding leadership from the top with Governor John Bel Edwards. And we very much appreciate all the outstanding work he's done. His better half, the First Lady of Louisiana, I know has been by his side every step of the way, and we are grateful for her. I know they've got their own cleaning up to do because the Governor's Mansion was flooded as well.

In addition, I want to acknowledge Senator Bill Cassidy, Senator David Vitter, Representative Garret Graves, and Representative Cedric Richmond; the mayor of Baton Rouge, Kip Holden; and somebody who I can't brag enough about, one of the best hires I made as President, the Administrator of FEMA, Craig Fugate, who has done such an outstanding job not just in dealing with this particular incident, but has really rebuilt FEMA so that there's a change of culture. And everybody knows that when the disaster happens, FEMA is going to be there on the ground, cooperating with State and local officials rapidly and with attention to detail, and keeping the families who've been affected uppermost in their minds. So we very much appreciate everything Craig's done.

It's hard, by the way, for Craig to be here because he's a Florida Gator—[*laughter*]—and he's been seeing a lot of LSU T-shirts as we've been passing by.

I just had a chance to see some of the damage from the historic floods here in Louisiana. I come here, first and foremost, to say that the prayers of the entire Nation are with everybody who lost loved ones. We are heartbroken by the loss of life. There are also people who are still desperately trying to track down friends and family. We're going to keep on helping them every way that we can.

As I think anybody who can see just the streets, much less the inside of the homes here—people's lives have been upended by this flood. Local businesses have suffered some terrible damage. Families have, in some cases, lost homes. They've certainly lost possessions, priceless keepsakes. I was just speaking to a young woman whose husband died shortly after the birth of her second child, and she was talking about how her daughter was trying to gather all the keepsakes that she had in her bedroom that reminded her of her father. And that gives you some sense that this is not just about property damage. This is about people's roots.

You also have a situation where there are a lot of kids who are supposed to start a new school year, and they're going to need some special help and support for a while.

Sometimes, when these kinds of things happen, it can seem a little bit too much to bear. But what I want the people of Louisiana to know is that you're not alone on this. Even after the TV cameras leave, the whole country is going to continue to support you and help you until we get folks back in their homes and lives are rebuilt.

And the reason I can say that with confidence is because that's what Americans do in times like this. I saw it when I visited displaced Louisianans when I came down here as a Senator after Katrina. I saw it when I visited New Orleans for the 10th anniversary last year. I know how resilient the people of Louisiana are, and I know that you will rebuild again. And what I've seen today proves it.

I want to thank all the first responders, the National Guard, all the good neighbors who were in a boat going around and making sure people were safe, showing extraordinary heroism and in some cases risking their own lives. Governor Edwards, the State of Louisiana, the city, the parish governments, they've all stepped up under incredibly difficult circumstances.

I just want to thank the people on this block. As I was walking down, one woman at the end,

elderly, she was on her own. She had just lost her daughter. You had a young man next door who was helping out his father, but had also offered to help out that neighbor, so that she could salvage as much as she could and start the process of rebuilding.

With respect to the Federal response, over a week ago I directed the Federal Government to mobilize and do everything we could to help. FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate arrived here a week ago to help lead that effort. Secretary of Homeland Secretary Jeh Johnson visited last week to make sure State and local officials are getting what they need.

To give you a sense of the magnitude of the situation here, more than 100,000 people have applied for Federal assistance so far. As of today, Federal support has reached $127 million. That's for help like temporary rental assistance, essential home repairs, and flood insurance payments.

FEMA is also working with Louisiana around the clock to help people who were displaced by floods find temporary housing. And any Louisiana family that needs help, you can find your nearest disaster recovery center by visiting FEMA.gov or calling 1–800–621–FEMA. I'm going to repeat that: FEMA.gov or 1–800–621–FEMA.

Now, Federal assistance alone is not going to be enough to make people's lives whole again. So I'm asking every American to do what you can to help get families and local businesses back on their feet. If you want help—if you want to help, Governor Edwards put together some ways to start at volunteerlouisiana.gov. That's volunteerlouisiana.gov.

And the reason this is important is because even though Federal money is moving out, volunteer help actually helps the State because it can offset some of its costs. Obviously, private donations are going to be extremely important as well. We want to thank the Red Cross for everything they're doing, but there are a lot of private philanthropic organizations, churches, parishes around the State and around the country who want to help as well. And that's how we're going to make sure that everybody is able to get back on their feet.

So let me just remind folks: Sometimes, once the floodwaters pass, people's attention spans pass. This is not a one-off. This is not a photo op issue. This is, how do you make sure that a month from now, 3 months from now, 6 months from now, people still are getting the help that they need? I need all Americans to stay focused on this. If you're watching this today, make sure that you find out how you can help. You can go to volunteerlouisiana.gov, or you can go to FEMA.gov. We'll tell you. We'll direct you—you can go to whitehouse.gov, and we'll direct you how you can help, all right?

But we're going to need to stay on this because these are some good people down here. We're glad that the families I had a chance to meet are safe, but they've got a lot of work to do, and they shouldn't have to do it alone. All right?

Thank you very much, everybody. God bless.

Federal Disaster Assistance

Q. With the damage you've seen, what more help may they need from Congress in terms of emergency spending?

The President. You know, we discussed that on the way down here. What you have is, the Stafford Act provides a certain match. A lot of the homes have flood insurance, but a lot of homes don't. And what Craig Fugate is doing, what I instructed him to do from the start, is let's get money out as fast as we can. Because we know that there's going to be a certain amount of assistance that's going to be forthcoming, so there's no point in waiting. We kind of make initial estimates and we start pushing stuff out. That helps us and helps the Governor and all these officials here do their jobs.

And then what we have to do is, as we fine-tune exactly what's needed—when we know, for example, how much permanent housing is going to have to be built, when we have a better sense of how much infrastructure has been damaged, what more we need to do in terms of mitigation strategies—that's when Congress, I think, may be called upon to do some more.

Now, the good news is, is that you've got four Members of Congress right here, and a

number of them happen to be in the majority, so I suspect that they may be able to talk to the Speaker and talk to Mitch McConnell. But in part because of the fine stewardship at FEMA and, frankly, because we've been a little lucky so far—and I'm going to knock on some wood—in terms of the amount of money that's gone out this year, FEMA has enough money for now to cover the costs that can be absorbed.

The issue is going to be less what we need to do in terms of paying for the short term; it's going to be the medium-term and the long-term rebuilding. Congress should be back in session right after Labor Day. By that time we'll probably have a better assessment. And in the meantime, lawyers at FEMA will be examining what statutory flexibility we've got. And I know the Governor has been right on top of making sure that Louisiana gets everything that it can get in order to help rebuild.

The President's Travel to Louisiana/Federal Disaster Assistance

Q. Mr. President, do you worry about that process becoming politicized and the trip here becoming politicized?

The President. No, I don't. First of all, one of the benefits of being 5 months short of leaving here is I don't worry too much about politics.

The second thing I have seen, historically, is that when disasters strike, that's probably one of the few times where Washington tends not to get political. I guarantee you nobody on this block, none of those first responders, nobody gives a hoot whether you're Democrat or Republican. What they care about is making sure they're getting the drywall out and the carpet out, and there's not any mold building, and they get some contractors in here and they start rebuilding as quick as possible. That's what they care about. That's what I care about.

So we want to make sure that we do it right. We want to make sure that we do it systematically. But the one thing I just want to repeat is how proud I am of FEMA. Because if you think about the number of significant natural disasters that have occurred since my Presidency began, you'd be hard pressed to find a local official anywhere in the country, including those in the other party, who wouldn't say that Craig Fugate and his team have been anything less than exemplary and professional.

And one of the things I did when I walked through each of these homes was ask, have you contacted FEMA? Have you filed? And uniformly they said that they had been in touch with FEMA; they had acted professionally. Some of them had already been out here for inspections.

And I think that does indicate why it's important for us to take the Federal Government seriously, Federal workers seriously. There's a tendency sometimes for us to bash them and to think that they're these faceless bureaucrats. But when you get into trouble, you want somebody who knows what they're doing, who's on the ground working with outstanding officials. And that's true whatever party. And I could not be prouder of the work that FEMA has done.

That doesn't mean that there aren't going to still be folks who need more help, and that we're not going to have some constraints statutorily, and Congress isn't going to have to step up. But it does mean that the basic backbone, the basic infrastructure and architecture that we have in terms of disaster response, I think, has been high quality. And I'm very proud of them for that. And I want to publicly acknowledge that at the moment, all right?

Thank you, guys.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1 p.m. in the driveway of a flood-damaged home in the Castle Place subdivision. In his remarks, he referred to Donna Edwards, wife of Gov. Edwards; and Zachary, LA, resident Linda Fernandez, who told the President of the recent death of her daughter.

Statement on the 25th Anniversary of Ukrainian Independence
August 24, 2016

Twenty-five years ago today, Ukraine declared its independence from the Soviet Union. On behalf of the American people, I'm proud to join the Ukrainian people in marking this historic anniversary. As we have been reminded in recent years, Ukraine's path has not always been easy. From the hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians who linked arms in a great human chain in 1990 to the fallen heroes of the Maidan, realizing the dream of independence has called on the solidarity and sacrifice of the Ukrainian people. The people of the United States, including proud Ukrainian Americans, have been honored to partner with Ukraine on this journey. Today we reaffirm that the United States will continue to stand with the Ukrainian people as they protect their sovereignty and territorial integrity, embrace the vision of a strong and united Europe, and deepen their commitment to democracy, anticorruption, and respect for human rights. I offer my best wishes to all the people of Ukraine. On this occasion, we are reminded that even in the most difficult moments, the glory and freedom of Ukraine—and the indomitable spirit of the Ukrainian people—lives on.

Statement on the Colombian Peace Agreement
August 25, 2016

This is a historic day for the people of Colombia. With the finalizing of a peace agreement between Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, the longest running war in the Western Hemisphere is coming to an end. We have witnessed, once again, that a sustained commitment to diplomacy and reconciliation can overcome even the most entrenched conflicts.

This accord is a tribute to the hard work and cooperation of countless Colombian leaders and citizens across parties and administrations who painstakingly laid the groundwork for this milestone. I especially want to commend President Juan Manuel Santos for his courageous leadership during 4 years of difficult negotiations. I, likewise, thank the Government of Cuba for hosting these talks, its coguarantor Norway, and the United States Special Envoy Bernie Aronson for his contributions to the peace process.

Even as we mark the end of an era of war, we recognize that the work of achieving a just and lasting peace is only beginning. Yet, just as the United States has been Colombia's partner in a time of war, we will be Colombia's partner in waging peace. It is in this spirit that I stood alongside President Santos earlier this year and announced a new chapter in our relationship, Peace Colombia, which will provide a framework to reinforce security gains, reintegrate former combatants into society, and extend opportunity and the rule of law.

For generations, too many Colombians have known only a country ravaged by war. Many around the world have viewed Colombia only as a place of conflict. But as I saw when I visited Colombia 4 years ago, a remarkable transformation has occurred. Thanks to the strength and spirit of the Colombian people, today's Colombia is moving toward a future of optimism and hope. The United States is proud to stand with the Colombian people as they continue on the path to lasting peace and prosperity.

The President's Weekly Address
August 27, 2016

Earlier this year, I got a letter from a South Carolina woman named Ashley, who was expecting her third child. She was, in her words, "extremely concerned" about the Zika virus, and what it might mean for other pregnant women like her.

I understand that concern. As a father, Ashley's letter has stuck with me, and it's why we've been so focused on the threat of the Zika virus. So today I just want to take a few minutes to let you know what we've been doing in response and to talk about what more we can all do.

Since late last year, when the most recent outbreak of Zika started popping up in other countries, Federal agencies like the Center for Disease Control and Prevention have been preparing for it to arrive in the U.S. In February, more than 6 months ago, I asked Congress for the emergency resources that public health experts say we need to combat Zika. That includes things like mosquito control, tracking the spread of the virus, accelerating new diagnostic tests and vaccines, and monitoring women and babies with the virus.

Republicans in Congress did not share Ashley's "extreme concern," nor that of other Americans expecting children. They said no. Instead, we were forced to use resources we need to keep fighting Ebola, cancer, and other diseases. We took that step because we have a responsibility to protect the American people. But that's not a sustainable solution. And Congress has been on a 7-week recess without doing anything to protect Americans from the Zika virus.

So my administration has done what we can on our own. Our primary focus has been protecting pregnant women and families planning to have children. For months now, the CDC has been working closely with officials in Florida and other States. NIH and other agencies have moved aggressively to develop a vaccine. And we're working with the private sector to develop more options to test for and prevent infection. For weeks, a CDC emergency response team has been on the ground in South Florida, working alongside the excellent public health officials there, folks who have a strong track record of responding aggressively to the mosquitoes that carry viruses like Zika. They know what they're doing.

Still, there's a lot more everybody can and should do. And that begins with some basic facts. Zika spreads mainly through the bite of a certain mosquito. Most infected people don't show any symptoms. But the disease can cause brain defects and other serious problems when pregnant women become infected. Even if you're not pregnant, you can play a role in protecting future generations. Because Zika can be spread through unprotected sex, it's not just women who need to be careful; men do too. That includes using condoms properly.

If you live in or travel to an area where Zika has been found, protect yourself against the mosquitoes that carry this disease. Use insect repellant, and keep using it for a few weeks, even after you come home. Wear long sleeves and long pants to make bites less likely. Stay in places with air conditioning and window screens. If you can, get rid of standing water where mosquitoes breed. And to learn more about how to keep your family safe, just visit CDC.gov.

But every day that Republican leaders in Congress wait to do their job, every day our experts have to wait to get the resources they need, and that has real-life consequences. It means weaker mosquito control efforts, longer wait times to get accurate diagnostic results, delayed vaccines. It puts more Americans at risk.

One Republican Senator said that "there's no such thing as a Republican position on Zika or Democratic position on Zika, because these mosquitoes bite everyone." I agree. And we need more Republicans to act that way, because this is more important than politics. It's about young moms like Ashley. Today, her new baby Savannah is healthy and happy. And that's got to be priority number one.

That's why Republicans in Congress should treat Zika like the threat that it is and make this their first order of business when they come back to Washington after Labor Day. That means working in a bipartisan way to fully fund our Zika response. A fraction of the funding won't get the job done. You can't solve a fraction of a disease. Our experts know what they're doing. They just need the resources to do it.

So, to all Americans out there, make your voices heard. And you should know that as long as I'm President, we're going to keep doing everything we can to slow the spread of this virus and put our children's futures first. Thanks, everybody.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 11:10 a.m. on August 26 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on August 27. In the address, the President referred to Clinton, SC, resident Ashley Young and her daughter Savannah; and Sen. Marco A. Rubio. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 26, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on August 27.

Statement on the Death of Juan Gabriel
August 29, 2016

For over 40 years, Juan Gabriel brought his beloved Mexican music to millions, transcending borders and generations. To so many Mexican Americans, Mexicans and people all over the world, his music sounds like home. With his romantic lyrics, passionate performances and signature style, Juan Gabriel captivated audiences and inspired countless young musicians. He was one of the greats of Latin music, and his spirit will live on in his enduring songs and in the hearts of the fans who love him.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this statement.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Certain Terrorist Attacks
August 30, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1622(d), provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. Consistent with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency declared in Proclamation 7463 with respect to the terrorist attacks on the United States of September 11, 2001, is to continue in effect for an additional year.

The terrorist threat that led to the declaration on September 14, 2001, of a national emergency continues. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue in effect after September 14, 2016, the national emergency with respect to the terrorist threat.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the 20th Annual Lake Tahoe Summit in Stateline, Nevada
August 31, 2016

The President. Hello, Tahoe! This is really nice. I will be coming here more often. My transportation won't be as nice—[*laughter*]—but I'll be able to spend a little more time here.

First of all, I want to thank Harry Reid. And because he's a captive audience, he doesn't usually like people talking about him, but he's stuck here, and so I'm going to talk about him for a second. [*Laughter*]

Harry grew up in a town that didn't have much: no high school, no doctor's office. Searchlight sure didn't have much grass to mow or many trees to climb. It didn't look like this. So, when Harry discovered a lush desert oasis down the road called Piute Spring, he fell in love. And when Harry met Landra, his—the love of his life, he couldn't wait to take her there, but when he got to the green spring that Harry remembered, he was devastated to see that the place had been trashed. And that day, Harry became an environmentalist, and he's been working hard ever since to preserve the natural gifts of Nevada and these United States of America.

So Harry has protected fish and wildlife across the State. He helped to end a century-old water war. He created Nevada's first and only national park. Right after I took office, the very first act Harry's Senate passed was one of the most important conservation efforts in a generation. We protected more than 2 million acres of wilderness and thousands of miles of trails and rivers. That was because of Harry Reid. Last summer, thanks to Harry Reid's leadership, we protected more than 700,000 acres of mountains and valleys right here in Nevada, establishing the Basin and Range National Monument.

Two decades ago, the Senator from Searchlight trained a national spotlight right here, on Lake Tahoe. And as he prepares to ride off into the sunset, although I don't want him getting on a horse—[*laughter*]—this 20th anniversary summit proves that the light Harry lit shines as bright as ever. Now, in a few months, I'll be riding off into that same sunset. [*Laughter*]

Audience members. Boo!

The President. No, it's true. It's okay. I mean, I'm still going to—I'm going to be coming around, I told you. I just won't have Marine One. [*Laughter*] I'll be driving.

But let me tell you, one of the great pleasures of being President is having strong relationships with people who do the right thing. They get criticized, they've got a tough job, but they get in this tough business because ultimately, they care about this country and they care about the people they represent. And that is true of Dianne Feinstein. That is true of Barbara Boxer. That is true of the outstanding Governor of California, Jerry Brown. That's true of our outstanding folks who work for the Department of Interior and work for the—[*laughter*]—who help look after our forests and help look after our national parks that help manage our water and try to conserve the wildlife and the birds and all the things that we want to pass on to the next generation.

And so I'm going to miss the day-to-day interactions that I've gotten. And I'll miss Harry, even though he's not a sentimental guy. [*Laughter*] We were talking backstage. Anybody who's ever gotten on the phone with Harry Reid, you'll be mid-conversation, and once he's kind of finished with the whole point of the conversation, you'll still be talking and you realize he's hung up. [*Laughter*] And he does that to the President of the United States. [*Laughter*] And it takes you, like, three of four of these conversations to realize he's not mad at you—[*laughter*]—but he doesn't have much patience for small talk.

But Harry is tough. I believe he is going to go down as one of the best leaders that the Senate ever had. I could not have accomplished what I accomplished without him being at my side. So I want to say publicly, to the people of Nevada, to the people of Lake Tahoe, to the people of America: I could not be prouder to have worked alongside the Democratic leader of the Senate, Harry Reid. Give him a big round of applause.

So it's special to stand on the shores of Lake Tahoe. I have never been here.

Audience members. Ooh!

The President. No, I haven't—look, it's not like I didn't want to come. [*Laughter*] Nobody invited me. [*Laughter*] I didn't know if I had a place to stay. So now that I have—I finally got here, I'm going to come back. And I want to come back not just because it's beautiful, not just because——

Audience member. We love you!

The President. Well, not just because I love you back. [*Laughter*] Not just because "The Godfather II" is maybe my favorite movie. [*Laughter*] As I was flying over the lake, I was thinking about Fredo. [*Laughter*] It's tough. But this place is spectacular because it is one of the highest, deepest, oldest, and purest lakes in the world. It's been written that the lake's waters were once so clear that when you were out on a boat, you felt like you were floating in a balloon. Unless you were Fredo. [*Laughter*] It's been written that the air here is so fine, it must be "the same air that the angels breathe."

So it's no wonder that for thousands of years, this place has been a spiritual one. For the Washoe people, it is the center of their world. And just as this space is sacred to Native Americans, it should be sacred to all Americans.

And that's why we're here: to protect this special, pristine place; to keep these waters crystal clear; to keep the air as pure as the heavens; to keep alive Tahoe's spirit; and to keep faith with this truth, that the challenges of conservation and combating climate change are connected, they're linked. Now——

Audience member. Keep fossil fuels in the ground.

The President. Okay.

Audience member. Keep fossil fuels in the ground.

The President. I'm sorry, I——

Audience member. Keep fossil fuels in the ground.

The President. I've got you, okay. I've got you. Thank you.

Audience member. Thank you.

The President. That's a great banner. I'm about to talk about it though, so you're interrupting me.

Now, I was going talk about climate change and why it's so important. You know, we tend to think of climate change as if it's something that's just happening out there that we don't have control over. But the fact is that it is manmade. It's not "we think" it's manmade. It's not "we guess" it's manmade. It's not "a lot of people are saying" it's manmade. It's not "I'm not a scientist, so I don't know." You don't have to be a scientist. You have to read or listen to scientists to know that the overwhelming body of scientific evidence shows us that climate change is caused by human activity. And when we protect our lands, it helps us protect the climate for the future.

So conservation is critical not just for one particular spot, one particular park, one particular lake. It's critical for our entire ecosystem. And conservation is more than just putting up a plaque and calling something a park. We embrace conservation because healthy and diverse lands and waters help us build resilience to climate change. We do it to free more of our communities and plants and animals and species from wildfires and droughts and displacement. We do it because when most of the 4.5 million people who come to Lake Tahoe every year are tourists, economies like this one live or die by the health of our natural resources. We do it because places like this nurture and restore the soul. And we want to make sure that's there for our kids too.

As a former Washoe Tribe leader once said, "The health of the land and the health of the people are tied together, and what happens to the land also happens to the people."

So that's why we've worked so hard—everybody on this stage, Harry's leadership, the work we've done in our administration—to preserve treasures like this for future generations. And we've proven that the choice between our environment, our economy, and our health is a false one. We've got to strengthen all of them together.

In the 20 years since President Clinton and Senator Reid started this summit, Federal,

State, and local leaders have worked together to restore wetlands and habitats, improve roads, reduce pollution, and prevent wildfires. And that last point is especially important because of the severe drought that all of you know and you can see with your own eyes. A single wildfire in a dangerously flammable Lake Tahoe Basin could cause enough erosion to erase decades of progress when it comes to water quality. And the drought also endangers one of the epicenters of the world's food production in California.

Now, a changing climate threatens even the best conservation efforts. Keep in mind, 2014 was the warmest year on record until, you guessed it, 2015. [*Laughter*] And now 2016 is on pace to be even hotter. For 14 months in a row now, the Earth has broken global temperature records. Lake Tahoe's average temperature is rising at its fastest rate ever, and its temperature is the warmest on record.

And because climate and conservation are challenges that go hand in hand, our conservation mission is more urgent than ever. Everybody who is here, including those who are very eager for me to finish so that they can listen to the Killers——

Audience members. [*Applause*]

The President. [*Laughter*] I've only got a few more pages. Our conservation effort is more critical, more urgent than ever. And we made this a priority from day one.

We, as Harry mentioned, protected more acres of public lands and water than any administration in history. Now, last week alone, we protected land, water, and wildlife from Maine to Hawaii, including the creation of the world's largest marine protected area. And, apropos of that young lady's sign, we've been working on climate change on every front. We've worked to generate more clean energy, use less dirty energy, waste less energy overall.

In my first months in office, Harry helped America make the single largest investment in renewable energy in our history. Dianne Feinstein, Barbara Boxer have been at the forefront of this. Jerry Brown has been doing incredible legislative work in his State. These investments have helped drive down the cost of clean power so it's finally cheaper than dirty power in a lot of places. It helps us multiply wind power threefold, solar power more than thirtyfold. It's created tens of thousands of good jobs. It's adding to paychecks, subtracting from energy bills. It's been the smart and right thing to do.

And then 1 year ago this month, we finalized a Clean Power Plan that spurs new sources of energy and gives States the tools to limit pollution that power plants spew into the sky. As I mentioned, last week, California passed an ambitious plan to cut carbon pollution. And, Jerry, I know you agree that more States need to follow California's lead.

On a national level, we've enacted tough fuel economy standards for cars, which means you're going to be able to drive further on a gallon of gas. It's going to save your pocketbook and save the environment. We followed that up with the first-ever standards for commercial trucks, vans, and buses. And as a consequence, during the first half of this year, carbon pollution hit its lowest level in a quarter century. And by the way, during the same time, we've had the longest streak of job creation on record. The auto industry is booming. There is no contradiction between being smart on the environment and having a strong economy, and we've got to keep it going.

So this isn't just a challenge, this is an opportunity. And today in Tahoe, we're taking three more significant steps to boost conservation and climate action. First, we're supporting conservation projects across Nevada to restore watersheds, stop invasive species, and further reduce the risks posed by hazardous fuels and wildfires. Number two, we're incentivizing private capital to come off the sidelines and contribute to conservation, because government can't do it alone. Number three, in partnership with California, we're going to reverse the deterioration of the Salton Sea before it is too late, and that's going to help a lot of folks all across the West.

So we're busy. [*Laughter*] And from here, I'm going to travel to my original home State of Hawaii, where the United States is proud to host the World Conservation Congress for the first time. Tomorrow I'm going to go to Mid-

way to visit the vast marine area that we just created and to honor those who sacrificed their lives to protect our freedom. Then, I head to China, with whom we've partnered, as the world's two largest economies and two largest carbon emitters, to set historic climate targets that are going to lead the rest of the world to a cleaner, more secure future.

So just go back to that quote by the Washoe elder: "It happens—what happens to the land also happens to the people." I've made it my—a priority in my Presidency to protect the natural resources we've inherited because we shouldn't be the last to enjoy them. Just as the health of the land and the people are tied together, just as climate and conservation are tied together, we share a sacred connection with those who are going to follow us. I think about my two daughters. I think about Harry's 19 grandchildren. [*Laughter*] He's been—yes, that's a lot of grandkids. [*Laughter*] The future generations who deserve clear water and clean air that will sustain their bodies and sustain their souls, jewels like Lake Tahoe.

And it's not going to happen without hard work. It sure is not going to happen if we pretend a snowball in winter means nothing is wrong. It's not going to happen if we boast about how we're going to scrap international treaties or have elected officials who are alone in the world in denying climate change or put our energy and environmental policies in the hands of big polluters. It's not going to happen if we just pay lip service to conservation, but then refuse to do what's needed.

When scientists first told us that our planet was changing because of human activity, it was received as a bombshell, but in a way, we shouldn't have been surprised. The most important changes are always the changes made by us. And the fact that we've been able to grow our clean energy economy proves that we have agency, we've got power. Diminishing carbon pollution proves we can do something about it. Our healing of Lake Tahoe proves it's within our power to pass on the incredible bounty of this country to a next generation. Our work isn't done.

And so, after I leave office and Harry leaves office and Barbara—she's going to be right alongside us, on a slightly smaller horse—[*laughter*]—because she's got to get up on top of it—after we've all left office, the charge to continue to make positive change is going to be in all of our hands, as citizens. I always say the most important office in a democracy is the office of citizen. Change happens because of you. Don't forget that.

Thank you. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:26 p.m. in the Lake Tahoe Outdoor Arena at Harveys Lake Tahoe. In his remarks, he referred to Senate Minority Leader Harry M. Reid, who introduced the President, and his wife Landra Reid; and former Washoe Tribe Chairman A. Brian Wallace.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting an Alternative Pay Plan for Members of the Uniformed Services
August 31, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I am transmitting an alternative plan for monthly basic pay increases for members of the uniformed services for 2017.

I am strongly committed to supporting our uniformed service members, who have made such great contributions to our Nation over more than a decade of war. As our country continues to recover from serious economic conditions affecting the general welfare, however, we must maintain efforts to keep our Nation on a sustainable fiscal course. This effort requires tough choices, especially in light of budget constraints.

Accordingly, I have determined it is appropriate to exercise my authority under section 1009(e) of title 37, United States Code, to set the 2017 monthly basic pay increase at 1.6 percent. This

decision is consistent with my fiscal year 2017 Budget and it will not materially affect the Federal Government's ability to attract and retain well-qualified members for the uniformed services.

The adjustments described above shall take effect on January 1, 2017.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to, Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting an Alternative Pay Plan for Civilian Federal Employees
August 31, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I am transmitting an alternative plan for pay increases for civilian Federal employees covered by the General Schedule and certain other pay systems in January 2017.

Title 5, United States Code, authorizes me to implement alternative pay plans for pay increases for civilian Federal employees covered by the General Schedule and certain other pay systems if, because of "national emergency or serious economic conditions affecting the general welfare," I view the adjustments that would otherwise take effect as inappropriate.

Accordingly, I have determined that it is appropriate to exercise my statutory alternative plan authority under 5 U.S.C. 5303(b) and 5304a to set alternative January 2017 across-the-board and locality pay adjustments. Specifically, I have determined that for 2017, across-the-board pay increases will be 1.0 percent. Also, I will make a decision by November 30, 2016, regarding an alternative plan for locality payments under 5 U.S.C. 5304a. The alternative plan for locality payments will be limited so that the total combined cost of the 1.0 percent across-the-board base pay increase and the varying locality pay increases will be 1.6 percent of basic payroll, consistent with the assumption in my 2017 Budget. These decisions will not materially affect our ability to attract and retain a well-qualified Federal workforce.

The adjustments described above shall take effect on the first applicable pay period beginning on or after January 1, 2017.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate.

Remarks at the International Union for the Conservation of Nature World Conservation Congress in Honolulu, Hawaii
August 31, 2016

The President. Thank you so much. Thank you. Thank you. Everybody, please have a seat. Well, welcome to Hawaii. [*Laughter*] It's a——

Audience members. Aloha!

The President. Aloha! [*Laughter*] You know, it's not often I get to welcome folks to my home State. But it's always wonderful to be here, even if it's only for a day. It's even rarer that not one but two hurricanes are set to pass through the islands over the next few days. [*Laughter*] So we've been working with the Governor and FEMA to make sure Hawaii's got everything it needs to keep our folks safe. And in the meantime, I'd just ask the people of Hawaii to listen to your State and local officials, and make sure you and your families are prepared for the storms. But the Governor says he's got it all taken care of. He's pushing them all south. And—[*laughter*].

I want to thank East-West Center President Charles Morrison for hosting all of us this evening. I want to recognize, in addition to the Governor, we also have Senator Brian Schultz—Schatz here. Where is Brian? There he is. I want to thank the 8,000 delegates from more than 180 countries who will share their expertise here at the IUCN World Conservation Congress, including President Zhang Xinsheng and Director General Andersen. To the world leaders and ministers who are here from the Pacific Island Conference of Leaders, thank you for joining us tonight. And I know many of you will be in Washington next month when Secretary Kerry hosts our 2016 Our Oceans Conference.

But today the United States is proud to host the IUCN Congress for the first time. I just came here from another beautiful place: Lake Tahoe, Nevada. And in my address there, I talked about climate change and conservation and how those two things are inextricably linked. Few people understand, I think, the stakes better than our Pacific Island leaders because they're seeing already the impact. Rising temperatures and sea levels pose an existential threat to your countries. And while some Members of the U.S. Congress still seem to be debating whether climate change is real or not, many of you are already planning for new places for your people to live. Crops are withering in the Marshall Islands. Kiribati bought land in another country because theirs may someday be submerged. High seas forced villagers from their homes in Fiji.

And no nation, not even one as powerful as the United States, is immune from a changing climate. I saw it myself last year in our northernmost State of Alaska, where the sea is already swallowing villages and eating away at shorelines; where the permafrost thaws and the tundra is burning; where glaciers are melting at a pace unprecedented in modern times. And it was a preview of our future if the climate keeps changing faster than our efforts to address it.

And that's why I've devoted so much of my time and my energy to making sure that we get this right while we still have time. I spoke about this at length in a speech earlier today, but over the past 7½ years, America has worked to generate more clean energy, use less dirty energy, and waste less energy overall. And it's made a difference. Our investments have tripled wind power, multiplied solar power thirtyfold, and in many places, helped clean energy become cheaper than dirty energy. And we did all of this while fueling the longest uninterrupted streak of job growth on record.

So there's no conflict between a healthy economy and a healthy planet. And that's why I've committed, along with Canada and Mexico, to get 50 percent of U.S. electricity from clean sources by 2025. And with many of our biggest businesses switching to clean energy, I'm absolutely confident that we can meet that goal.

But that's not all. I've also made sure we're better prepared for the impacts of climate change, because even as we need to hit the brakes so that we don't go over the cliff, we're not going to come to an immediate stop. We know that there is still going to be an inevitable impact as a consequence of rising temperatures. And that means conservation has been a cornerstone of my Presidency.

Since taking office, I've protected more than 548 million acres of our lands and waters for our children and our grandchildren. I have to say that Teddy Roosevelt gets the credit for starting the National Parks system, but when you include a big chunk of the Pacific Ocean, we now have actually done more acreage—[*laughter*]—than any other President. We've designated national monuments from Maine to Ohio to California. And just last week, thanks to the hard work of many people in this room, including Senator Schatz, I created the world's largest marine preserve, quadrupling the size of our monument at Papahanaumokuakea. This is an area twice the size of Texas that's going to be protected, and it allows us to save and study the fragile ecosystem threatened by climate change.

Tomorrow I'm going to travel to the Midway Atoll to see it for myself. Seven thousand species live in its waters, a quarter of which are not found anywhere else in the world. Ancient

islanders believed it contained the boundary between this life and the next. Hundreds of brave Americans gave their lives there in defense of the world's freedom. So this is a hallowed site, and it deserves to be treated that way. And from now on, it will be preserved for future generations.

So I'm very proud of these achievements, but we always have to remind ourselves no nation can do this alone. We're going to have to tackle climate change together. Nations like many of yours obviously feel a special urgency about this. The biggest emitters, like my country and China, have a special responsibility to act to make sure that countries willing to do their part move past the dirty phase of development to move into a clean energy strategy. That was a key principle in the Paris Agreement. And I was mentioning to the leaders here, we could not have gotten a Paris Agreement without the incredible efforts and hard work of the island nations. They made an enormous difference, and we're very proud of the work that they did.

And this is why we've been working to accelerate public-private clean energy innovation, making sure that resources will be there for countries that need help preparing for the impacts of climate change that we can no longer avoid. It's also why tonight I can announce more than $30 million in new commitments for our friends in the Pacific: funding for investments like stronger infrastructure, more sustainable development, and safer drinking water. So—[*applause*].

From here I'm going to be traveling to China, where we'll be meeting for the G–20 summit, and climate will be a centerpiece of our agenda. Joint U.S.-Chinese leadership on climate was part of the reason that we were able to get Paris done, and I'm going to push to build on that record as long as I occupy this office and probably even after I leave it.

There's an old Hawaiian proverb that loosely translates to "Unite to move forward." It seems simple enough, but the natives used it as a reminder that if you want to row a canoe, every oar has to be moving in unison; otherwise, I don't know, you go in circles. [*Laughter*] You just go around and around. Your pace slows. You drift. You get caught up in the currents, and you get off course.

Well, when it comes to climate change, there is a dire possibility of us getting off course, and we can't allow that to happen. That's why our united efforts are so important. Government has a role to play but so do scientists and inventors and investors, all working to revolutionize clean energy production. Entrepreneurs and academics and leaders in this room are collaborating across continents. And everyday citizens of the world are going to have to push their own communities to adopt smarter practices and to push those of us in positions of power to be less concerned with special interests and more concerned about the judgment of future generations.

And that's why we're all here. That's what this is all about. And for me, this is especially meaningful. I was telling my staff, a lot of my life started about a mile radius around here. [*Laughter*] My mother and father met probably a couple hundred yards from here. [*Laughter*] It's true. I went to school about a mile from here. I was actually born about a mile from here. [*Laughter*] My grandmother and my grandparents lived most of their lives a short way away from here.

And so, since Malia was born, since my oldest child was born, I've brought them here every Christmas for the last 18 years now. And I want to make sure that when they're bringing their children here or their grandchildren here, that they are able to appreciate the wonders and the beauty of this island and of the Pacific and every island.

So I know you have the same feeling, and that's why we've got to unite to move forward. We have to row as one. If we do, we might just save the one planet that we've got.

Thank you very much, everybody. God bless. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:37 p.m. in the Conference Hall at the East-West Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. David Y. Ige of Hawaii. He also referred to Proclamation 9478, signed August 25, which expanded the existing Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument and is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks on the Expansion of the Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument on Midway Atoll
September 1, 2016

Well, let me start by saying that this is hallowed ground. As I said before, the Battle of Midway was a turning point in the battle for the Pacific and World War II. An incredible number of young men lost their lives here protecting our freedom. And for us to be able to visit this monument and remind ourselves of the sailors and airmen and everyone involved who were able to rebuff a Japanese force that vastly outnumbered them is a testament to their courage and their perseverance.

It is also spectacular as an ecosystem. And our ability to not just designate, but build on, this incredible natural beauty, which is home to 7,000 marine species, that sees millions of birds, many of them endangered, sea turtles, the Hawaiian monk seal, black coral—all sorts of species that in many other places we no longer see—for us to be able to extend that 550,000 miles in the way that we've done ensures not only that the Midway Atoll is protected, but that the entire ecosystem will continue to generate the kind of biodiversity. It allows us to study and research and understand our oceans better than we ever have before.

It's also critically important for us to examine the effects that climate change are taking here in the Pacific Ocean, the world's largest body of water. And as I said yesterday, there are countries that now are at risk and may have to move as a consequence of climate change. There are enormous effects on the human presence in the ocean that creatures are having to adapt to and, in some cases, cannot adapt to.

And so, for us to be able to protect and preserve this national monument, to extend it and, most importantly, to interact with native Hawaiians and other stakeholders so that the way we protect and manage this facility is consistent with ancient traditions and the best science available, this is going to be a precious resource for generations to come. And it's an example of the kind of visionary conservation measures that, although I'm the one who ultimately signs it, reflects the work of a lot of people and a lot of organizations and a lot of participation.

So we've very, very proud of what they've done. And I look forward to knowing that 20 years from now, 40 years from now, 100 years from now, this is a place where people can still come to and see what a place like this looks like when it's not overcrowded or destroyed by human populations.

All right? Thank you, guys.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:32 p.m. at Turtle Beach. In his remarks, he referred to Proclamation 9478, signed August 25, which expanded the existing Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument and is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Final Report of the Commission on Care
September 1, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

My Administration is committed to the ongoing transformation of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and I strongly support many of the recommendations and the underlying objectives offered by the Commission on Care (Commission) in its final report transmitted on July 6, 2016. These recommendations underscore the fundamental challenges that face the VA health care system, and the reforms needed to provide America's veterans with the high quality health care they need and deserve—both now and in the future. We have made great strides in delivering improved care to our veterans over the past 8 years, and we

will continue to work tirelessly to uphold the solemn responsibility to ensure all our veterans are getting the care and benefits they have earned.

I concur with 15 of the 18 Commission recommendations, many of which are already being implemented as part of the ongoing MyVA transformation that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (Secretary) has put in place. These include areas such as enhancing clinical operations, establishing a more consistent policy for appealing clinical decisions, eliminating disparities in how health care is delivered to veterans from different backgrounds, modernizing IT systems, and establishing new processes for leadership development and performance management. These reforms are steps in the right direction and will help put VA on a trajectory to ensure veterans continue to receive timely and high quality care, while strengthening the VA health care system that millions of veterans depend on every day. I appreciate and applaud the Commission for their work.

Of particular note, I strongly support the Commission's principle that creating a high-performing, integrated health care system that encompasses both VA and private care is critical to serving the needs of veterans. In fact, my Administration outlined its approach to achieve this same goal in VA's *Plan to Consolidate Community Care*, submitted to the Congress in October 2015. While this approach must be implemented in a fiscally sustainable way, it builds on more than a decade of work with veterans, health care providers, and community partners, to streamline and enhance VA's capability to deliver services essential to veterans' health. VA's plan also recognizes the importance of strengthening VA's partnerships with other Federal health care providers, including the Department of Defense and Indian Health Service, as well as tribal health programs, academic teaching affiliates, and Federally Qualified Health Centers.

At the same time, it is critical that we preserve and continue to improve the VA health care system and ensure that VA has the ability to serve veterans. Research shows that in many areas, such as mental health, VA delivers care that is often better than that delivered in the private sector. VA also provides unique, highly specialized care for many medical conditions, such as spinal cord and traumatic brain injuries, which are simply not available to the same extent outside of VA. In addition, VA provides a comprehensive approach to wellness that includes the treatment of physical injuries and mental health. This multidisciplinary approach allows providers to address the full spectrum of veteran needs beyond medical care, including other VA benefits and services.

For these reasons, I concur with the Commission's vision for creating integrated care networks that more tightly coordinate VA and non-VA care, but urge the Congress to act on this recommendation by enacting VA's *Plan to Consolidate Community Care*. The alternative approach outlined in VA's plan would achieve the goals of the Commission to create a veteran-centric approach to care that appropriately balances issues of access, quality, and cost-effectiveness. It would more clearly ensure the long-term viability and sustainability of the VA health care system, preserve VA's role as the primary coordinator of care for veterans, and safeguard its ability to carry out its other research, education, and emergency preparedness missions that are critical to our Nation's well-being. And it would ensure that veterans have access to the care they need—whether at the VA or out in the community—without forcing untenable resource tradeoffs that would limit the ability of VA to carry out other parts of its mission on behalf of veterans.

We must also ensure that VA has the ability to operate this integrated health care system in a rational, efficient, and dynamic way that best serves the interests of both veterans and taxpayers. For that reason, I have concerns with the Commission's proposed governance structure for the VA health care system. The proposal would undermine the authority of the Secretary and the Under Secretary for Health, weaken the integration of the VA health care system with the other services and programs provided by the VA, and make it harder—not easier—for VA to implement transformative change. Moreover, the Department of Justice

has advised that the proposed recommendation would violate the Appointments Clause of the Constitution. I do, however, support portions of the recommendation that would establish a term appointment for the Under Secretary for Health, to ensure that position is removed from the turmoil and turnover of the political cycle.

For those recommendations I agree with and whose objectives are not yet achieved, I am directing the VA to develop plans to complete their implementation. Additionally, in recognition of the role of the MyVA initiative in transforming the VA as military service evolves, I have directed the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to incorporate the principles of the MyVA initiative into VA strategic planning, leadership training, and performance monitoring. In those areas where legislation is required, my Administration will work closely with the Secretary to transmit to the Congress the relevant legislative proposals, which I recommend be enacted without delay.

Improving veterans' health care remains a critical issue of national importance, and my Administration will work with veterans and military families, the Congress, Veterans Service Organizations, and other stakeholders to ensure all our veterans are getting the care and benefits they need when they need them.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate.

Statement on the Death of President Islom Karimov of Uzbekistan
September 2, 2016

At this challenging time of President Islom Karimov's passing, the United States reaffirms its support for the people of Uzbekistan. This week, I congratulated President Karimov and the people of Uzbekistan on their country's 25 years of independence. As Uzbekistan begins a new chapter in its history, the United States remains committed to partnership with Uzbekistan, to its sovereignty, security, and to a future based on the rights of all its citizens.

The President's Weekly Address
September 3, 2016

Hi, everybody. Before you fire up the barbecue for the long weekend, I want to talk a little bit about the reason we get to celebrate Labor Day, and that's the labor movement that helped to build this country and our middle class.

For generations, every time the economy has changed, hard-working Americans marched and organized and joined unions to demand not simply a bigger paycheck for themselves, but better conditions and more security for the folks working next to them too. Their efforts are why we can enjoy things like the 40-hour workweek, overtime pay, and a minimum wage. Their efforts are why we can depend on health insurance, Social Security, Medicare, and retirement plans.

All of that progress is stamped with the union label. All of that progress was fueled with a simple belief: that our economy works better when it works for everybody.

That's the spirit that's made the progress of these past 7½ years possible. We've rescued our economy from another depression, cut our unemployment rate in half, and unleashed the longest string total job growth on record. And we've focused on making sure that the gains of a growing economy don't just flow to a few at the top, but to everybody.

That's why we took action to help millions of workers finally collect the overtime pay they've

earned. It's why I issued a call to raise the minimum wage, and when Congress ignored that call, 18 States and the District of Columbia, plus another 51 cities and counties went ahead and gave their workers a raise. It's why the very first bill I signed was the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act why we gave paid sick days to Federal contractors, why we've fought for worker safety and the right to organize.

And we've made good progress. For a few years after the recession, the top 1 percent did capture almost all income gains. But that share has been cut by almost half. Last year, income for everybody else grew at the fastest pace since the 1990s. And another 20 million Americans know the financial security of health insurance.

I'm the first to say we've got more work to do in the years ahead. I know we're in the heat of a more raucous political season than usual, but we can't get so distracted by the latest bluster that we lose sight of the policies that will actually help working families get ahead. The truth is, that's what's caused some of the frustration that's roiling our politics right now: Too many working folks still feel left behind by an economy that's constantly changing.

So, as a country, we've got some choices to make. Do we want to be a country where the typical woman working full time earns 79 cents for every dollar a man makes or one where they earn equal pay for equal work? Do we want a future where inequality rises as union membership keeps falling or one where wages are rising for everybody and workers have a say in their prospects? Are we a people who just talk about family values while remaining the only developed nation that doesn't offer its workers paid maternity leave, or are we a people who actually value families, and make paid family leave an economic priority for working parents?

These are the kinds of choices in front of us. And if we're going to restore the sense that hard work is rewarded with a fair shot to get ahead, we're going to have to follow the lead of all those who came before us. That means standing up not just for ourselves, but for the father clocking into the plant, the sales clerk working long and unpredictable hours, or the mother riding the bus to work across town—even on Labor Day—folks who work as hard as we do. And it means exercising our rights to speak up in the workplace, to join a union, and above all, to vote.

That's the legacy we celebrate on Labor Day. And I'm confident that's the legacy that we'll build upon in the years ahead.

So thanks, everybody. Happy Labor Day, and enjoy the long weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 11:10 a.m. on August 26 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on September 3. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 2, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on September 3.

Remarks Announcing the Formal Entry of the United States Into the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Paris Agreement in Hangzhou, China

September 3, 2016

[*President Obama made his remarks during a meeting with President Xi Jinping of China and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of the United Nations. His remarks were joined in progress.*]

We are here together because we believe that for all the challenges that we face, the growing threat of climate change could define the contours of this century more dramatically than any other challenge.

One of the reasons I ran for this office was to make sure that America does its part to protect this planet for future generations. Over the past 7½ years, we've transformed the United States into a global leader in the fight against climate change. But this is not a fight

that any one country, no matter how powerful, can take alone. That's why last December's Paris Agreement was so important. Nearly 200 nations came together as a strong, enduring framework to set the world on a course to a low-carbon future. And someday, we may see this as the moment that we finally decided to save our planet.

There are no shortage of cynics who thought the agreement would not happen. But they missed two big things: the investments that we made to allow for incredible innovation in clean energy, and the strong, principled diplomacy over the course of years that we were able to see pay off in the Paris Agreement. The United States and China were central to that effort. Over the past few years, our joint leadership on climate has been one of the most significant drivers of global action.

In 2014, President Xi and I stood together in Beijing to announce landmark climate targets for our two countries to meet. That announcement set us on the road to Paris by jumpstarting an intense diplomatic effort to put other countries on the same course. In 2015, we stood together in Washington to lay out additional actions our two countries would take, along with a roadmap for ultimately reaching a strong agreement in Paris. This year, in 2016, we meet again to commit formally to joining the agreement ahead of schedule, creating the prospect that the agreement might enter into force ahead of schedule as well.

The United States and China are taking that step today, as our two nations formally join the Paris Agreement. Of course, we could not have done this extraordinary work without the strong support of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, who has been an outstanding leader on this issue as well.

Now, just as I believe the Paris Agreement will ultimately prove to be a turning point for our planet, I believe that history will judge today's efforts as pivotal. For the agreement to enter into force, as has already been stated, 55 countries representing 55 percent of global emissions must formally join. Together, the U.S. and China represent about 40 percent of global emissions. So today we are moving the world significantly closer to the goal that we have set.

We have a saying in America that you need to put your money where your mouth is. And when it comes to combating climate change, that's what we're doing, both the United States and China. We're leading by example. As the world's two largest economies and two largest emitters, our entrance into this agreement continues the momentum of Paris and should give the rest of the world confidence—whether developed or developing countries—that a low-carbon future is where the world is heading.

Of course, the Paris Agreement alone won't solve the climate crisis. But it does establish an enduring framework that enables countries to ratchet down their carbon emissions over time and to set more ambitious targets as technology advances. That means full implementation of this agreement will help delay or avoid some of the worst consequences of climate change and pave the way for more progress in the coming years. This is the single best chance that we have to deal with a problem that could end up transforming this planet in a way that makes it very difficult for us to deal with all the other challenges that we may face.

President Xi and I intend to continue working together in the months ahead to make sure our countries lead on climate. Three years ago, in California, we first resolved to work together to secure a global agreement to phase down the use of super pollutants known as HFCs, and we're now just 6 weeks away from final negotiations. We also have the chance to reach a global agreement to curb emissions from the global airline industry, one that actually has the support of industry. And today we're putting forward roadmaps to get both negotiations done this year.

On each of these issues, the United States and China have now developed a significant record of leadership on one of the most important issues of our time. Our teams have worked together and developed a strong relationship that should serve us very well. And despite our differences on other issues, we hope that our

willingness to work together on this issue will inspire greater ambition and greater action around the world.

Yes, diplomacy can be difficult, and progress on the world stage can be slow. But together, we're proving that it is possible. And I was reflecting before we came in here with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon about the meeting that we had in Copenhagen in my first year of my Presidency, which was quite chaotic. And I think it is fair to say that if you had looked at the outcome of that meeting, the prospects of us being here today, the prospects of a Paris Agreement seemed very far away. And yet here we are, which indicates that where there's a will and there's a vision—and where countries like China and the United States are prepared to show leadership and to lead by example—it is possible for us to create a world that is more secure, more prosperous, and more free than the one that was left for us.

So, to all of you that have participated in this extraordinary effort, thank you very much. Thank you to President Xi. Thank you to the Secretary-General.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:46 p.m. in Ru Yi Hall at the West Lake State Guest House. President Xi and Secretary-General Ban also made remarks, and no transcript was provided. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Xi Jinping of China in Hangzhou
September 3, 2016

Mr. President, I want to thank you, your Government, the people of China, and the people—Hangzhou—for the excellent accommodations and what I am sure will be a productive G–20 summit. Our meeting here is an opportunity to discuss the breadth and importance of the U.S.-China relationship. As you indicated, the event that we just came from in which we deposited our ratification of the Paris Agreement is just one example of what can happen when our two countries work effectively together.

I know that at the G–20, we're committed to working with other countries to build sustainable, inclusive economies and create opportunities for all of our people. In joining the Paris Agreement today, we're demonstrating our shared commitment to climate change. I look forward to an extensive discussion on our shared interests in advancing regional and global security, from the Korean Peninsula to the fight against ISIL. We very much welcome China's contributions to global development, peacekeeping, and refugee assistance.

And because of the hard work of our teams, across every dimension—from people-to-people ties, energy, scientific, and educational exchanges—we have seen steady progress during the course of my Presidency and during the course of the multiple meetings that you and I have had. Consistent with the notion of a new model for relations between our countries, what I think we've been able to achieve is practical and constructive efforts where our interests intersect and a candid discussion of those areas where we differ and our ability to manage them in a way that does not put the bilateral relationship at risk. And I know that we will have, once again, candid conversations about some of those differences around issues like human rights or cyber or maritime. But our teams have been engaged. They have worked very well and diligently together.

And so I want to thank not only you, Mr. President, but also your entire Government for the constructive way in which we have worked in preparation for this meeting. And I'm absolutely committed to ensuring not only that this is a productive meeting, but that we're also setting the stage so that the next U.S. administration comes in with a relationship that is on a strong and productive footing.

So thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 6:35 p.m. in Ming Yuan Hall at the West Lake State Guest House. In his remarks, he referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant

(ISIL) terrorist organization. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 4. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Joint Statement—United States-China Climate Change Cooperation Outcomes
September 3, 2016

1. President Barack Obama and President Xi Jinping have forged a historic partnership between the United States and China to lead in combatting climate change. From the Sunnylands meeting in 2013, to the landmark November 2014 Joint Announcement on Climate Change and the September 2015 and March 2016 Joint Presidential Statements on Climate Change, leadership by the United States and China has galvanized global action to build a green, low-carbon, and climate-resilient world and was a major contributor to achieving the historic Paris Agreement. Climate change has formed a central pillar of the bilateral relationship between the two countries. Both sides are committed to implementing the three presidential joint statements on climate change and will continue to deepen and broaden bilateral climate change cooperation, building on the concrete progress and productive outcomes achieved thus far.

2. Today, the United States and China deposited with United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon their respective instruments to join the Paris Agreement, marking a significant contribution towards the early entry into force of the Paris Agreement. The two Presidents call on all other Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to join the Paris Agreement as early as possible with the expectation of the Agreement's entry into force this year. The Presidents further express their continued commitment to work together and with others to promote the full implementation of the Paris Agreement. The United States and China will formulate and publish their respective strategies for mid-century, low-greenhouse gas emission development. The United States will release its strategy in 2016, and China will do so as early as possible. The two countries agree to hold a series of technical exchanges on the formulation of such strategies, beginning this year.

3. The United States and China are committed to working bilaterally and with other countries to advance the post-Paris negotiation process and to achieve successful outcomes this year in related multilateral fora. The United States and China commit to work together and with others to reach agreement this year on an ambitious and comprehensive HFC amendment to the Montreal Protocol, including an early first reduction step and early freeze date for Article 2 and Article 5 Parties respectively and an ambitious phase-down schedule, with increased and adequate financial support from Article 2 Parties to help Article 5 Parties with their implementation. The United States and China also intend to work together on critical research regarding the safe use of flammable alternatives and commit to collaborate on enhanced domestic action to reduce use of HFCs, improve efficiency standards, support policies to transform the air conditioning market, and remain active participants in the Clean Energy Ministerial's Advanced Cooling Challenge.

4. The two sides welcome the decision of the ICAO Council to forward to the ICAO Assembly its recommended Resolution on a global market-based measure to address carbon emissions from international aviation. Recognizing the important role of international aviation in addressing climate change, the United States and China support the ICAO Assembly to reach consensus on a global market-based measure this October, and expect to be early participants in such measure.

5. The two Presidents celebrate the achievements of the U.S.-China Climate Change Working Group (CCWG) and U.S.-China Clean Energy Research Center (CERC) in recent years and commit to further enhance bilateral cooperation on climate change under these and other frameworks. They welcome the success of the U.S.-China Climate-Smart/Low-Carbon

Cities Summits in 2015 and 2016 and look forward to the next summit, to be held in Boston, the United States, in 2017, as well as the next Clean Energy Ministerial to be hosted by China in 2017.

6. The United States and China commit to continue taking ambitious domestic action to further promote the transition towards green, low-carbon and climate-resilient economies both domestically and internationally.

7. In the United States' power sector, a five-year extension of production and investment tax credits for wind and solar energy will deploy roughly 100GW of renewable energy over the next 5 years, and the United States has paused new coal leasing on federal lands, while undertaking a comprehensive review of the federal coal program, which makes up roughly 40% of United States coal supply. In the transportation sector, the United States has finalized efficiency standards for heavy-duty vehicles, which will reduce more than 1 billion tons of carbon pollution over the life of the program. In the building sector, the United States is on track to finalize 20 additional efficiency standards for appliances and equipment by the end of the year, which will contribute to achieving its goal of cutting 3 billion metric tons of carbon pollution from such standards. With respect to non-CO2 emissions, the United States finalized this year measures to reduce domestic HFCs and methane from the oil and gas and landfill sectors.

8. China is making great efforts to advance ecological civilization and promote green, low-carbon, climate resilient and sustainable development. During the 13th Five-Year Period (2016–2020), China will lower its carbon dioxide per unit of GDP and energy consumption per unit of GDP by 18% and 15% respectively, increase the share of non-fossil fuels in primary energy consumption to 15% and increase the forest stock volume by 1.4 billion cubic meters, as concrete and crucial steps towards implementing its nationally determined contribution. China will continue its efforts to increase energy efficiency in industries, transportation and buildings, promote green power dispatch to accelerate the development of renewable energy, start in 2017 its national emission trading system and phase down the production and consumption of HFCs. China will also promote low-carbon development of transportation by developing standard modern transportation equipment and energy-efficient, environmentally-friendly means of transport.

9. Internationally, as part of an ongoing commitment to strengthen low-carbon policies, in 2015 the United States worked with other OECD member countries to adopt new OECD guidelines to limit export finance for overseas coal-fired power plants. The United States also remains committed with other developed countries to the goal of jointly mobilizing 100 billion US dollars per year by 2020 to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation and adaptation action. This funding will come from a wide variety of sources, public and private, bilateral and multilateral, including alternative sources of finance. China is taking concrete steps to strengthen green and low-carbon policies and regulations with a view to strictly controlling public investment flowing into projects with high pollution and carbon emissions both domestically and internationally.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Theresa May of the United Kingdom and an Exchange With Reporters in Hangzhou, China
September 4, 2016

President Obama. Good morning, everybody. I want to begin by saying what a pleasure it was for me to meet with Prime Minister May and congratulate her on becoming Prime Minister. We've had occasion to be together before in other settings, but this was the first time that

I had a chance to address her as Madam Prime Minister. I'm glad that Theresa and I could meet early in her tenure. The Prime Minister continues to be a steadying influence during a time of transition.

It was a wide-ranging conversation, but it began with the basic premise that even as the U.K. pursues an orderly exit from the EU, together, we reaffirm the very special relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom. It will not simply endure, but it will continue to grow stronger with time. The vibrant economic partnership between our countries will continue. As the U.K. gains further clarity on its new relationship with the EU, our two countries will be discussing ways in which we continue to sustain and strengthen our trade and investment ties. Here at the G–20, we will continue to pursue an agenda of inclusive and sustainable growth.

When it comes to security issues, under Prime Minister May, the U.K. has reaffirmed its strong commitment to the transatlantic security architecture. We are NATO allies. We see the world in the same way. We will continue to oppose Russian aggression in Ukraine. We will continue to counter cyber threats. We will continue to work diligently to root out terrorist networks, and we'll work to destroy ISIL.

At a time when the international order is under strain, I also emphasized the degree to which United Kingdom's leadership on the world stage is essential. We are grateful for the U.K.'s indispensable role in achieving landmark agreements on climate change, on issues of energy security and global development. We will continue to count on being able to stand together, stand strong with our British friends to make sure that international norms and rules are enforced and are maintained.

The bottom line is, is that we don't have a stronger partner anywhere in the world than the United Kingdom. And despite the turbulence of political events over the last several months, we have every intention to making sure that that continues.

And so I look forward to our partnership. This is my last G–20, Theresa's first. But the continuity of the relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom, that stretches back many decades, and it will continue for many decades to come.

Theresa.

Prime Minister May. Thank you. Thank you very much. And I'm very pleased to be here at my first G–20 summit and pleased to have had the opportunity to meet you, Barack. And as you say, the United States is a special partner for the United Kingdom, a longstanding ally and a close friend. We share the same values of freedom, openness, and tolerance. We share intelligence and technology. Our troops train, fight, and recuperate together. And together, we do more together than any other two countries in the world. And I think that's as true now as it has ever been.

And our discussions today have been wide ranging. We focused on Brexit, on the threat from Daesh, the situation in Syria, and on the need to do more to solve the migration crisis. I'd just like to say a few words on each of those.

First, we have talked about Britain's decision to leave the European Union: the process now and what Brexit means for U.K.'s relationships with our European friends, but with other countries too. The U.K. has always been a strong partner for the U.S., and that will remain the case. We have a thriving economic relationship. British businesses export twice as much to the United States as they do to our next largest market, and the United States is the largest inward investor in Britain, with total American investments providing more than 1 million jobs.

We need to build on that strong foundation as the U.K. leaves the EU. We're both strong supporters of free trade, and today we've discussed how to take forward consultations to ensure that the U.K. and the U.S. have the strongest possible trading relationship. And this reinforces my belief that as we forge a new global role for the U.K., we can and will seize the opportunities that Brexit presents and make a success of it.

We've also discussed the threat from Islamist terrorism. The U.K. and the U.S. have been at the forefront of efforts to defeat Daesh in Iraq and Syria, and it's vital that we take

action to degrade Daesh abroad to help keep the streets of Britain safe. And the coalition is making progress. Daesh is losing territory in Iraq and Syria. Its finances have been hit. Its leaders are being killed, and fighters are deserting. And in recent weeks, thanks to U.S. efforts, Daesh in Libya have been forced backwards too.

But we must not be complacent. We know these terrorists are intent on destroying our way of life, and the threat in the U.K. remains severe. So, as we drive Daesh out of one area, we must be alert to the risk that they will seek a safe haven't elsewhere, and we must work internationally to defeat their ideology of hatred and murder. And we need to support other countries in the region, helping to protect them from the threat of Daesh and thereby protecting people home in Britain too.

We must also continue to strive for a political situation in Syria. The goal remains a negotiated settlement which delivers stability for all Syrians and a Government with whom we can work to defeat the terrorists. We welcome U.S. efforts to broker an end to the violence and to help protect moderate opposition forces. It's vital that humanitarian supplies get to innocent Syrians who are in desperate need. And this afternoon I will urge President Putin to do all he can to get the aid convoys in and to end the indiscriminate bombing of civilians. And next week, the Foreign Secretary plans to host the moderate Syrian opposition in London as we continue to support their hopes for a democratic, peaceful, and inclusive Syria.

And finally, we discussed the global migration crisis. Across the world, there are now over 244 million migrants, 65 million displaced people, and over 20 million refugees. This growing crisis cannot be solved by the actions of one country alone. We need an international approach, which better identifies those refugees who most need support, deals more effectively with economic migrants, and does more to address the root causes of migration.

This issue will be top of the agenda at the U.N. General Assembly later this month, and I hope we can make concrete progress to stem the flow of migration and help people in their home countries and regions.

So we've had a productive meeting. It's been an opportunity to discuss how we respond to some of the great challenges we face. And I look forward to continuing our discussions at the summit, particularly on the global economy. We understand that many of our citizens are frustrated by the pace of globalization and feel they're not experiencing the benefits of international trade. We both believe this is an issue that we as G–20 leaders cannot afford to ignore. Instead, we must all work together to spur economic growth, to boost free trade and build a fairer economy that truly works for all.

Thank you.

President Obama. So we're going to take a couple of questions, starting with Andrew Beatty of AFP [Agence France-Presse].

Syria/Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) Terrorist Organization/The President's Overseas Travel/China-U.S. Relations/Press Freedom

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President. I had a question on Syria, first of all. It seems like there is a deal with the Russians within reach. I was wondering, do you not think there's a risk that there's another short-lived agreement that doesn't end the war, but which allows the Russians to deflect criticism at the G–20 here and at the U.N. General Assembly? And secondly, what do you make of the kerfuffle yesterday at the airport?

And for the Prime Minister, you said that Brexit means Brexit, but I wonder if you could be a bit more specific. Could you categorically rule out the U.K. staying within the EU? Thank you.

President Obama. Okay. With respect to Syria, we have long been interested in finding a way to reduce the violence, improve humanitarian access on the ground as a precursor for a political transition inside of Syria.

Now, it is a very complicated piece of business. You have the Asad regime, which has been killing its own citizens with impunity, supported by the Russians and the Iranians. You have a moderate opposition that has continuously tried to consolidate a position that

would lead to a inclusive and representative government, but is often outgunned. Then you have ISIL, and you have Al Qaida in the form of Nusra on the ground as well and a range of other players from the Turks and the Gulf States to the Kurds. Trying to corral all of those different forces into a coherent structure for negotiations is difficult.

But our conversations with the Russians are key, because if it were not for the Russians, then Asad and the regime would not be able to sustain its offensive. And these are difficult negotiations. We have grave differences with the Russians in terms of both the parties we support, but also the process that's required to bring about peace in Syria. But if we do not get some buy-in from the Russians on reducing the violence and easing the humanitarian crisis, then it's difficult to see how we get to the next phase.

So John Kerry and his counterpart, Sergey Lavrov, have been working around the clock, as well as a number of other negotiators, to see what would a real cessation of hostilities look like that could provide that humanitarian access and provide people in places like Aleppo relief. We're not there yet. And understandably, given the previous failures of cessations of hostilities to hold, we approach it with some skepticism. But it is worth trying.

To the extent that there are children and women and innocent civilians who can get food and medical supplies and get some relief from the constant terror of bombings, that's worth the effort. And I think it's premature for us to say that there is a clear path forward, but there is the possibility at least for us to make some progress on that front.

In addition, I should point out that the U.N. special rep, Staffan de Mistura, has been also coming up with a longer term structure for a political transition. We are supporting his efforts as well. And those two things, hopefully, can operate in tandem.

And the last point I would make is that none of this is slowing down our very aggressive efforts against ISIL. As we've seen in recent weeks, not only have we been able to clear out ISIL from additional territory inside of Syria as well as Iraq, but we continue to systematically go after their leadership, including their head of external operations and probably the second most prominent person in the ISIL infrastructure. So none of this is slowing down a very aggressive effort to go after what I think we all consider to be a—the principal threat that's emanating out of Syria.

And with respect to our visit here, so far, it's been extraordinarily productive. It is true that, not for the first time, when we come here there ends up being issues around security and press access. And part of the reason is, is because we insist on a certain approach to our press pool, for example, that other countries may not insist on. We think it's important that the press have access to the work that we're doing, that they have the ability to answer questions. And we don't leave our values and ideals behind when we take these trips. It can cause some friction. It's not the first time it's happened. It doesn't just happen in China, it happens in other countries where we travel. I think this time maybe the—as Josh put it—the seams are showing a little more than usual in terms of some of the negotiations and jostling that takes place behind the scenes. And in fairness, when delegations travel to the United States, sometimes, there are issues about our security procedures and protocols that they're aggravated with, but don't always get reported on.

But none of this detracts from the broader scope of the relationship. As we saw yesterday, President Xi and I continued what has been a historic joint project to elevate climate change issues. The bilateral discussions that we had yesterday were extremely productive and continue to point to big areas of cooperation. When I bring up issues like human rights, there are some tensions there that perhaps don't take place when President Xi meets with other leaders, but that's part of our job, that's part of what we do.

And so I wouldn't overcrank the significance of it, because, as I said, this is not the first time that these things happened. And it doesn't just happen here. It happens in a lot of places, including, by the way, sometimes, our allies. Part

of it is, we also have a much bigger footprint—[*laughter*]—than a lot of other countries. And we've got a lot of planes and a lot of helicopters and a lot of cars and a lot of guys, and if you're a host country, sometimes, it may feel a little bit much. [*Laughter*] I—you notice some chortling among the Brits; they probably find it a little overwhelming as well. [*Laughter*]

So I—but the one thing I will say is, we don't make apologies for pushing a little bit harder when it comes to press access, and that's been the case from my very first state visit here. And we don't always get everything that we'd like to see, but we think it's important for us to at least stand up for those values. Okay?

Prime Minister May. And on the question you asked me about Brexit: Yes, Brexit does indeed mean Brexit. On the 23d of June, the people in the U.K. voted for the U.K. to leave the European Union. The Government respects that decision. We respect the wishes of the people, and we will put that into practice. So there will be no second referendum, no attempt to turn the clock back, no attempt to try and get out of this. The U.K. will be leaving the European Union.

I think we have a question from Jason Groves from the Daily Mail.

United Kingdom's Referendum Vote To Leave the European Union/United Kingdom-U.S. Trade Relations

Q. Yes, Jason Groves from the Daily Mail. Mr. President, you came to London earlier this year and urged the British people not to vote for Brexit and warned them that they'd be at the back of the queue for a trade deal if they did. Do you guys think we got it wrong on Brexit? And do you regret making that threat, or are you really going to punish us for taking a democratic decision?

And could I ask, just quickly——

President Obama. Quite the editorial question.

Q. I work for the Daily Mail. [*Laughter*]

President Obama. Yes, I get it. [*Laughter*] That was quite clear.

Q. And could I ask just quickly whether you've got any advice for the Prime Minister this autumn, when she's got the pleasure of hosting Donald Trump in London?

Prime Minister, can I ask whether you've had any trade reassurances from the President about your place in his queue? And could I also ask you quickly about Hinkley Point, which you'll be discussing with President Xi tomorrow? You've said you'll look at all the evidence. Does that include getting the National Security Council to look at the potential security implications?

Prime Minister May. On the first point that you've raised, Jason, I mean, we've had discussions about the importance of the trading relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States. As you know, I've been very clear that, following Brexit, we will be looking to establish new trading relationships around the globe. I think there are real opportunities for the United Kingdom; we will be going out and seizing those opportunities. But we have a very strong—as I indicated in my own statement with some of the figures that I gave—we have a very strong trading relationship with the United States, and we will be looking to ensure that we can maintain that strongest possible relationship into the future.

And on the question that you ask about Hinkley Point, I will be doing exactly as you've said, indeed, in your question, Jason, which is, as you know, I'll be looking at all the evidence around the—this issue. I—the way I work is that I don't just take an instant decision; I actually look at the evidence, take the advice, consider it properly, and then come to a decision. And I've been very clear that I will be doing that and will be taking a decision sometime this month.

President Obama. It is absolutely true that I believed pre–Brexit vote and continue to believe post–Brexit vote that the world benefited enormously from the United Kingdom's participation in the EU. But I also said at the time that, ultimately, this was a decision for the British people, and the British people made that decision.

And I never suggested that we would, quote, unquote, "punish" Great Britain. As you will recall, if you were at that press conference, I was asked about the viability of immediately negotiating a separate trade agreement between the United States and the United Kingdom, because I think the notion was that the consequences of Brexit would be minimal and we would just go ahead and start lining up a whole bunch of free trade agreements separate and apart from the EU relationship.

And my simple point was, is that we've put great priority on, first, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which, now that we have an agreement, we want to put into force, that we are also negotiating effectively with the entire EU around the transatlantic trade agreement, or T–TIP, and those negotiations are proceeding.

And so it would not make sense for us to put those efforts aside, particularly at a time when my working assumption was, is that if in fact the people of the United Kingdom decided to leave the European Union, their first priority would be to renegotiate terms of trade with the economic unit that they sell half of their goods to.

So that, in fact, is I think the approach that the Prime Minister is wisely taking—that in a prudent, well-informed fashion with consultations with businesses and stakeholders, as well as her counterparts across the Channel, they—the Prime Minister makes a determination about when to invoke article 50, how those negotiations should proceed. And we are fully supportive of a process that is as little disruptive as possible so that not just the people of the United Kingdom, but people around the world can benefit from continued recovery and economic growth.

And what I've committed to Theresa is, is that we will consult closely with her as she and her Government move forward with the Brexit negotiations to ensure that we don't see adverse effects in the trading and commercial relationships between the United States and the United Kingdom. Obviously, we have an enormous amount of trade that already takes place. We have a lot of investment between British companies in the United States and U.S. companies in the United Kingdom, and that's not going to stop. And we're going to do everything we can to make sure that the consequences of the decision don't end up unraveling what is already a very strong and robust economic relationship that can become even stronger in the future.

But first things first. And the first task is going to be figuring out what Brexit means with respect to Europe. And our first task is making sure that we get, first, TPP done, but also that we move forward on the T–TIP negotiations in which we've already invested a lot of time and effort.

Okay? Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:36 a.m. in Ballroom C at the JW Marriott Hotel Hangzhou. In his remarks, he referred to President Bashar al-Asad of Syria; Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Viktorovich Lavrov of Russia; U.N. Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura; Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, spokesperson and chief of external operations for the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization, also known as "Daesh," who was killed in a U.S. airstrike near Al Bab, Syria, on August 30; White House Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest; and President Xi Jinping of China. Prime Minister May referred to President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; and Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Boris Johnson of the United Kingdom. A reporter referred to Republican Presidential nominee Donald J. Trump.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey in Hangzhou
September 4, 2016

President Obama. This is the first opportunity that I've had to meet face to face with President Erdogan since the terrible, attempted coup that took place in July. By taking to the streets to resist the coup attempt, the Turkish people once again affirmed their commitment to democracy and the strength and resilience of the democratic institutions inside of Turkey.

I indicated at the time the unequivocal condemnation of these actions and spoke personally to President Erdogan to offer any support that we might be able to provide in both ending the attempted coup, but also in investigating and bringing the perpetrators of these illegal actions to justice. And I've assured him that our Justice Department and my national security team will continue to cooperate with Turkish authorities to determine how we can make sure that those who carried out these activities are brought to justice and reaffirm our strong support for the Turkish people and Turkish institutions.

I also had the opportunity to express my deepest condolences for those killed and wounded by recent terrorist attacks in Turkey, which sadly have become too common an occurrence, just as they have all around the world. And in the face of these savage attacks, not only do we stand with Turkey and the people of Turkey and express our sympathy for them, but more importantly, we want to take actions to ensure that together, we are defeating the scourge of terrorism.

Turkey is a strong NATO ally, a critical member of the coalition against ISIL. Our military, our law enforcement and intelligence cooperation has helped push ISIL back, especially along the Syrian-Turkish border, but we now need to finish the job. And we discussed ways in which we can further cooperate in that regard.

President Erdogan and I also agreed to continue pursuing a peaceful political transition in Syria, which is the only lasting way to end the terrible civil war there. And together, we'll keep working to ease the humanitarian suffering, make sure that Syrian civilians can once again live in security, and that we can stabilize the region as a whole.

Finally, Tayyip, I want to thank you personally, as well as your Government and the people of Turkey, for your exceptional humanitarian support of refugees. Turkey hosts more refugees than any country in the world, and it has been a key partner in providing aid and assistance to vulnerable citizens that have poured out of Syria as well as Iraq. We look forward to doing even more when we host a U.N. refugee summit in—later, at the margins of the U.N. General Assembly. And I—as I indicated to President Erdogan, this is not an issue in which Turkey should be carrying the burden alone. It needs support from all of us, and we intend to provide it.

So, Tayyip, once again, it's good to see you. We're glad you're here, safe, and that we are able to continue to work together to build on the strong alliance and partnership that we've established during the course of my Presidency.

President Erdogan. President Obama, thank you. Barack, thank you. First, it's a pleasure for me to get together with you within the framework of the G–20 summit here in Hangzhou.

In the aftermath of July the 15th failed coup, we've had a telephone conversation, and this is the first time we got together in order to see each other face to face. And I would like to thank you for your support against this coup attempt.

Of course, Turkey and the United States had been a strategic partner and a very close ally. And with you, under your leadership, the alliance between our countries became a model partnership. And the relations between our countries are very special, and they are getting stronger as time goes by, especially the terrorist attacks and the failed coup followed one another, and it's a very meaningful time that we're going through.

And against all of the terrorist attacks around the world, as NATO members, we have to embrace a common attitude. It is impossible for us to remain silent, vis-a-vis these attacks, and we have to embrace the same stance against all terrorist organizations around the world. All forms of terrorism is bad. All forms of terrorism is evil. There is no good terrorist or a bad terrorist; every terrorist is condemned. Every terrorist organization is doomed. And our stance against terrorism is quite obvious.

And against these, especially the developments in Syria and Iraq are very concerning. Our fight against Daesh terrorist organization and other terrorist organizations, PYD, YPG, and our fight against these terrorist organizations will continue, as committed as they have ever been. I hope and pray that—which is—our hope is never to see a belt of terrorism, a corridor of terrorism emerging in or around our region. And in order for that to be eliminated, Turkey will forge a very close cooperation and a solidarity with the coalition forces, and we will prevail out of this cooperation, and we will be very victorious.

And at the same time, with regards to the Fethullahist terrorist organization, our operations are underway within the framework of the rule of law. Against this terrorist, before the coup attempt, we had put together some documentation, amassed some evidence, which we have submitted to the United States. And the post–coup-attempt-related documentation and evidence therein will be amassed, and they will be submitted to our friends in the United States. The efforts are still underway.

We had welcomed a delegation from the American Ministry of Justice and a similar delegation from the Turkish Ministry of Justice will go to the United States. Our Minister of Justice and Minister of Interior will travel together to the United States, whereby they will concentrate their efforts on the elaboration of this evidence. And with this opportunity, I would like to underline once again that our solidarity and cooperation is most welcome, and this summit may be very auspicious for us all.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:56 p.m. in Meeting Rooms 9 and 10 of the JW Marriott Hotel Hangzhou. In his remarks, he referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization, also known as Daesh. President Erdogan referred to Fethullah Gülen, a Turkish citizen living in exile in Saylorsburg, PA, whose followers were blamed by President Erdogan for the July 15 coup attempt; and Minister of Justice Bekir Bozdağ and Minister of Interior Süleyman Soylu of Turkey. He also referred to the Democratic Union Party (PYD) and People's Protection Units (YPG), Kurdish organizations based in northern Syria. President Erdogan spoke in Turkish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Letter to the Nation's Workforce on the Observance of Labor Day
September 4, 2016

To America's hardworking men and women:

When workers raise their voices for a fair wage and dignity in the workplace, they sustain the story of America: the idea that if you work hard, you should be able to get ahead, retire with dignity, and leave something behind for the next generation.

At the beginning of the last century, American workers came together to fight for dignity and justice in the workplace. They stood up, marched, and raised their voices for a 40-hour workweek, overtime pay, a minimum wage, and the right to organize for better pay and benefits. They fought to make dangerous jobs safer, whether working in a plant or fighting a fire. These hard-fought victories became the cornerstones of the greatest middle class the world has ever known.

Today, we again face a changing economy. Since I took Office, we've made extraordinary progress together. We have steadily come back

from the worst economic crisis in generations. But too many American families don't yet feel like they've gotten their fair share. That's why Americans need a voice at work.

For years, labor unions have been the driving force for raising that voice. But as union membership has fallen, inequality has risen. It's not hard to understand why. It might be easy to dismiss or even punish a lone employee coming forward and asking for a fair wage. But when folks come together—when it's not just one voice but a chorus—they're impossible to ignore. That's a key reason why Americans in unionized jobs still make roughly 26 percent more than their non-union peers.

As I've said before, if I were looking for a good job that lets me build some security for my family, I'd join a union. If I saw a problem in my workplace, I'd organize my coworkers to do something about it. Especially because today, more workers than ever need a stronger voice—from pipefitters and fast food workers to journalists and tech workers.

So, in today's economy, we should make it easier, not harder, for you—America's workers—to make your voices heard. We know that when employees come together and start a conversation about how to build a better workplace, we all benefit. That's why whether you're a union member, an organizer, an activist, or just an employee ready to speak up, I'm proud of the work you do to continue and grow that conversation.

You have the right to join together, speak up, and win a seat at the table. You have the right to talk to your coworkers about how much you make or how you'd change your workplace, as long as you're not doing it while you're supposed to be working. And the law says an employer can't fire you, demote you, or change your shift because you're talking to colleagues about advocating for yourselves, whether that's through a union or through some other means.

History shows that working families can get a fair shot in this country—but only if we are willing to organize and fight for it. So whether you simply talk to your coworkers or supervisors about what matters to you, or take the step of joining a union, the power ultimately rests with you.

If folks like you keep up the fight, I have no doubt that America will always be a nation where if you work hard you can get ahead and build an even better life for your children. That's why I started my career as an organizer all those years ago—and it's why I believe in you.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary as a White House blog post. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of the letter.

The President's News Conference in Hangzhou, China
September 5, 2016

The President. Good evening, everybody. Well, let me begin by thanking President Xi and the people of Hangzhou and China for the hospitality in hosting this G–20 summit on the shores of beautiful West Lake. Thank you so much. *Xiè xie*.

Now, this visit offered the eighth opportunity for President Xi and me to meet. We agreed to advance our cooperation across a range of issues, including climate change, global health and development, peacekeeping, counternarcotics, and nuclear security. We also addressed our differences on issues like religious freedom, maritime security, and a level economic playing field, but we did so in a clear, candid, direct, and, I think, constructive way. That has helped us to manage problems, and it's consistently helped us to improve relations between the United States and China.

This has also been my 10th and final G–20 meeting. It goes by fast. And so, before I take your questions, let me put into context what we've done over the course of all these G–20 meetings.

And I think back to April 2009, when hundreds of thousands of Americans were losing their jobs and their homes and their savings each month and unemployment was on its way to 10 percent. Around the world, for the first time in a generation, the global economy was contracting, trade was shrinking, and the international financial system was nearly frozen. By several key measures, the global economy was on a worse trajectory than it was at the outset of the Great Depression.

But the size and the scope of the crisis was not what made that London G–20 historic. What made it historic was the speed and magnitude of our collective response. One nation couldn't solve the problem alone, so together—developed and developing nations alike—took a comprehensive and unprecedented set of actions to prevent another depression and set the stage for recovery.

Most important was to create jobs and growth by stimulating demand across our economies. And America led the way. By then, in just my first 10 or so weeks as President, we had already passed the Recovery Act, set in motion plans to rescue our auto industry, stabilize our banks, jumpstart loans to small businesses, and launch programs to help homeowners refinance and stay in their homes. And our G–20 partners would follow with similar actions.

To stabilize the global economy, we rejected the protectionism that could deepen the crisis. We cooperated to keep markets open and trade finance flowing and bolstered the international finance system's lending capacity to respond to countries that were hurting the most. And to prevent future crises, we took steps to reform our financial regulatory system, including the historic Wall Street reforms that we passed more than 6 years ago.

Now, these were the actions we took in 2009. They were actions that prevented another depression, and created conditions for the global economy to grow by more than 25 percent over the past 7 years.

What we also did though was to elevate the G–20 to become the world's premier forum for international economic cooperation. And that decision allowed us as the global recovery progressed, to take further actions to strengthen the global economy. And that's what we came to Hangzhou to do.

We've had long debates over the years about the best ways to promote sustained growth, but America's voice in the G–20 has always been one of bold action, and that stance has been backed up by our economic performance. Since job growth turned positive in early 2010, America's businesses have created more than 15 million new jobs. We've cut the unemployment rate in half. And so far this year, wages have risen by almost 3 percent, which is much faster than the pace of inflation.

But one of the things that we learned through the G–20 process is that, more than ever, our economies are interconnected, and we've got more work to do together to keep the global economy growing. We have to do more to grow wages faster, to shrink inequality faster, to give everybody a shot at opportunity and security in a changing economy. And that should be the way forward for the G–20: to make sure that the benefits of trends like globalization and technological progress are shared broadly by more workers and families who still feel like the global economy is not working for them.

And that's what we did here at this G–20 summit. We committed to using all of our policy tools to promote robust, inclusive growth that creates opportunity for young people and the middle class that they're working to join. We focused on making sure that businesses can compete fairly and all working families can take advantage of the new prospects the digital economy creates. And we reaffirmed our commitment to support emerging economies through an array of development initiatives.

We also discussed ways to unlock the mutual benefits that trade provides while keeping it fair for our workers and the playing field level for our businesses. And that includes high-standard trade agreements that actually benefit the middle class, like the TPP. That includes working together to abstain from unfair currency practices and address corruption and global tax evasion. And it includes our

agreement to establish a new forum to address some of the market-distorting policies in the global steel sector that have hurt workers and businesses.

We also added momentum to the fight to protect our planet for future generations. On Saturday, the U.S. and China formally entered the Paris Agreement. And today the G–20 welcomed efforts to enter the Paris Agreement into force by the end of this year.

So, if there's anything that the past 8 years have taught us, it's that the complicated challenges of the 21st century cannot be met without coordinated and collective action. Agreement is not always easy, and results do not always come quickly. Respecting different points of view, forging consensus instead of dictating terms, that can sometimes be frustrating. But it is how progress has been won and how it will be won in the future. It's how we've come as far as we have in the 8 years since the crisis affected us all. And it's how the G–20 can make progress for all people in the years to come.

So, with that, let me take some questions. And I will start with Roberta Rampton of Reuters.

President Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines/Philippines-U.S. Relations

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. I want to ask you about tomorrow, the next leg of your trip, a little bit. And tomorrow you're going to be meeting for the first time with President Duterte, and he's a leader whose war on drugs has led to the death of about 2,400 people in just the last 2 months since he took office. And today he said in a very colorful way that you'd better not bring this up. And I'm wondering, are you committed to raising this with President Duterte? And are you concerned that meeting him legitimizes his approach on this issue?

The President. Good. Well, I just came out of a long day of meetings—[*laughter*]—so I just heard about some of this. But I have seen some of those colorful statements in the past, and so clearly, he's a colorful guy. [*Laughter*] And what I've instructed my team to do is to talk to their Philippine counterparts to find out, is this, in fact, a time where we can have some constructive, productive conversations? Obviously, the Filipino people are some of our closest friends and allies, and the Philippines is a treaty ally of ours. But I always want to make sure that if I'm having a meeting, that it's actually productive and we're getting something done.

We recognize the significant burden that the drug trade plays just not just in the Philippines, but around the world. And fighting narcotrafficking is tough. But we will always assert the need to have due process and to engage in that fight against drugs in a way that's consistent with basic international norms. And so, undoubtedly, if and when we have a meeting, that this is something that's going to be brought up, and my expectation, my hope is, is that it could be dealt with constructively.

But I'll have my team discuss this. I've got a whole bunch of folks that I'm going to be meeting with over the course of the next several days. And as I said, historically, our relationship with the Philippines is one of our most important, and my relationship with the Philippine people has been extraordinarily warm and productive. So I expect that will continue. But I want to make sure that the setting is right and the timing is right for us to have the best conversation possible.

Q. So you may not meet with him? You might—[*inaudible*]?

The President. Well, I'm—no. As I said, I'm going to just make an assessment. I just got out of these meetings. What is certainly true is, is that the issues of how we approach fighting crime and drug trafficking is a serious one for all of us, and we've got to do it the right way.

Michelle Kosinski [CNN].

Russia-U.S. Relations/Syria/Ukraine/Cybersecurity

Q. Thank you. Same subject, I guess, of colorful guys. What can you tell us about this hour-and-a-half-long meeting you had with President Putin? The tone of it? Any progress that was made? And do you agree with him that the relationship between our two countries is now frozen?

And on the cyber front, Senator Reid recently cited intelligence briefings when he was expressing his suspicions that Russia is trying to meddle in the election and may even have direct ties to one of the campaigns. What can you tell us? Do you think Russia is trying to influence the U.S. election through hacking?

The President. Yes. Well, President Putin is less colorful, but typically, the tone of our meetings are candid, blunt, businesslike, and this one was no different. We had a range of issues that we had to discuss, but the two most important were, as has been reported, discussions that have been taking place between Secretary Kerry and Russia's Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, about ways in which we can institute a meaningful, serious, verifiable cessation of hostilities in Syria, and our capacity to provide some humanitarian relief to families, children, women who are suffering enormously under the burdens of that war.

As you'll recall, we had initiated a cessation of hostilities a while back. Initially, it did lessen some of the violence, and then, slowly, it unwound. And we're back into a situation in which Asad's regime is bombing with impunity. That in turn, we think, is actually strengthening the capacity of Nusra to recruit people who might not have initially been sympathetic to terrorism, but now view anyone who's fighting against Asad as legitimized. And that is a very dangerous dynamic.

And so we have had some productive conversations about what a real cessation of hostilities would look like that would allow us both, the United States and Russia, to focus our attention on common enemies, like ISIL and Nusra. But given the gaps of trust that exist, that's a tough negotiation, and we haven't yet closed the gaps in a way where we think it would actually work. But my instructions to Secretary Kerry, and Mr. Putin's instructions to Mr. Lavrov, was to keep working at it over the next several days, because the faster we can provide some relief to folks on the ground, the better off we're going to be.

And that then is a predicate for us to be able to transition into a serious conversation about a political solution to this problem that would involve all the parties that have either directly or indirectly involved themselves in the Syrian conflict.

We also spent time talking about Ukraine. There is a Minsk agreement that arose out of the Normandy negotiations between Russia, Ukraine, France, and Germany, but it hasn't been implemented. And I made very clear that until it is implemented, the United States is not going to pull down sanctions; that it is important for both sides to try to seize this opportunity in the coming weeks to finalize an agreement and to figure out a sequence in which that document is put into effect. And there was agreement not just between myself and Mr. Putin, but also with Chancellor Merkel and President Hollande, that that effort should increase in urgency over the next several weeks.

And so that what was constructive, but not conclusive. And we'll have to see whether we can actually get this done, or whether, in fact, President Putin—despite talking about wanting a negotiation and a solution—in fact, is comfortable with this constant low-grade conflict along the Russia-Ukraine border.

And finally, we did talk about cybersecurity, generally. I'm not going to comment on specific investigations that are still live and active. But I will tell you that we've had problems with cyber intrusions from Russia in the past, from other countries in the past. And look, we're moving into a new era here, where a number of countries have significant capacities. And frankly, we've got more capacity than anybody both offensively and defensively. But our goal is not to suddenly, in the cyber arena, duplicate a cycle of escalation that we saw when it comes to other arms races in the past, but rather, to start instituting some norms so that everybody is acting responsibly.

We're going to have enough problems in the cyberspace with nonstate actors who are engaging in theft and using the Internet for all kinds of illicit practices, and protecting our critical infrastructure, and making sure that our financial systems are sound. And what we cannot do is have a situation in which suddenly this becomes the Wild Wild West, where countries that have significant cybercapacity start

engaging in competition, unhealthy competition, or conflict through these means, when, I think wisely, we've put in place some norms when it comes to using other weapons.

So that's been a topic of conversation with President Putin, as it has been with other countries. We've started to get some willingness on the part of a lot of countries around the world, including through our G–20 process, to adopt these norms, but we've got to make sure that we're observing them. All right?

William Wan [Washington Post].

Laos-U.S. Relations

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Heading into Laos, what are the main things you can offer its leaders? And what do you plan to push for in return? On the offering side, for example, I'm wondering how you view U.S. responsibility for unexploded ordnance. On the asking side, what are you pushing for most? Is it human rights? Closer U.S. ties in the face of China? Improving their problems with governance and corruption? What's the priority?

The President. Well look, symbolically, this is important. I'll be the first U.S. President to visit Laos. And when you think about the history of the United States and Laos, I think it's useful to see what's happened in the evolution of our relationship with Vietnam, a country that I just visited recently.

At the outset, as we're trying to build trust, a lot of work can be done around war legacy issues. For the Lao, that involves dealing with unexploded ordnance, which is still plaguing big chunks of the countryside. And since Laos is still a relatively poor country that is developing, their capacity alone to clean that up is hampered by a lack of resources. We should help. And my expectation is, is that in our meetings over the course of several days, that we'll be able to provide some really concrete assistance that ensures that innocent kids who are running through a field or a farmer that's trying to clear a field or a business that's trying to get set up, that they're not endangered by the possibility of an explosion.

Likewise, we have deep commitments to accounting for those who were lost during that war. And as was true with Vietnam—to the extent that we're able to find out more about our missing in action and our POWs—that not only provides enormous comfort and meaning for families and is consistent with our traditions, but it also ends up being a show of good faith on the part of the country and a way for us to move into a next phase of a relationship.

And so a lot of the conversation, I think, will start there, but it doesn't end there. We've had an initiative, for example, helping all the countries along the Mekong Delta to find ways to harness development and deal with environmental issues. And that's something that we've been doing through ASEAN over the course of several years now. For us to be able to expand some of that work, I think, would be important. Establishing people-to-people exchanges is another area that historically has been important.

I do think Laos, seeing the enormous economic progress that Vietnam and China and others have made, are going to be very interested in finding ways in which they can advance into the global economy and help themselves grow, and I think that we can be a useful partner there.

So I think there will be a broad-based agenda. But if you think about the visit I made to Ho Chi Minh City and driving through those streets and the enormous wellspring of good will that you saw, that started with some of the same kinds of steps that we're going to be taking with Laos. But I think we can, hopefully, do it faster, make more progress faster than we did over the course of 10, 15 years, because we've learned some things. And I think Laos is very eager to engage with us, and we're eager to engage with them.

So I look forward to visiting what I hear is a beautiful country.

Christi Parsons [Chicago Tribune].

Trans-Pacific Partnership/Quarterback Colin Kaepernick of the National Football League's San Francisco 49ers

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. On the Trans-Pacific Partnership, how do you plan to sell this to these Asian leaders who still have work to do

in their own countries, and with some political—you know, it's not—the politics aren't easy, and maybe they don't want to do that. So much of it seems like it—the future is rocky in the U.S. Can you—I mean the U.S. usually ratifies its trade deals. Do you plan to convey a sense of inevitability? Do you feel that for the lame duck session, even if it doesn't happen then, do you feel like it's inevitable anyway?

And if I may, I wonder what you think about the silent protest of Colin Kaepernick. And I also wonder what you think about the public response to it, which is really divided? I mean, some police don't want to secure 49ers games, and many fans feel that he's giving voice to something they feel strongly. So I just wonder how you look at that.

The President. Okay. Well with respect to TPP, I don't have to sell it to Asian leaders here who were part of the negotiations because they see this as the right thing to do for their own countries. And when you look at the architecture, the structure of TPP, what it does is open up new markets for us that are generally closed. Our markets are more open than theirs for the most part, so we benefit from a reduction of—in tariffs and taxes that are already in place.

But for many of them, what they benefit from is, this trade deal is the spur, the incentive for them to engage in a whole bunch of structural reforms that they know, over the long term, will reinvigorate their economy.

So, for example, Prime Minister Abe of Japan, yes, he's having to make some difficult decisions about opening up markets that previously have been closed, but he's also looking at a couple of decades of stagnation and anemic growth. And what he said to the Japanese people is, if we want to break out of this, then we're going to have to change how we do business, and this provides us a roadmap of how we can become more competitive on the world stage.

Vietnam, that for the first time is debating in a very serious way how they can provide protections to their workers and allow them to participate and have voice and bargain for wages, and, yes, that's tough politically for Vietnam. On the other hand, they recognize that if they want to move up the value chain in the global market that they've got to start abiding by basic norms.

So the good news is, they're ready to go. And what I'll be telling them is that the United States has never had a smooth, uncontroversial path to ratifying trade deals, but they eventually get done. And it's my intention to get this one done, because, on the merits, it is smart for America to do it. And I have yet to hear a persuasive argument from the left or the right as to why we wouldn't want to create a trade framework that raises labor standards, raising environmental standards, protects intellectual property, levels the playing field for U.S. businesses, brings down tariffs.

It is indisputable that it would create a better deal for us than the status quo. Nobody has been able to describe to me—with all the general criticism of trade that you hear coming out of some quarters—nobody is able to describe to me how this would not be a significant improvement for U.S. workers and U.S. businesses going forward compared to the status quo.

And so I intend to be making that argument. I will have to be less persuasive here because most people already understand that. Back home, we'll have to cut through the noise once election season is over. It's always a little noisy there.

And in terms of Mr. Kaepernick, I've got to confess that I haven't been thinking about football while I've been over here, and I haven't been following this closely. But I—my understanding, at least, is, is that he's exercising his constitutional right to make a statement. I think there's a long history of sports figures doing so. I think there are a lot of ways you can do it. As a general matter, when it comes to the flag and the national anthem and the meaning that that holds for our men and women in uniform and those who fought for us, that is a tough thing for them to get past to then hear what his deeper concerns are. But I don't doubt his sincerity, based on what I've heard. I think he cares about some real, legitimate issues that have to be talked about. And if nothing else, what he's done is, he's generated

more conversation around some topics that need to be talked about.

So, again, I haven't been paying close attention to it, but you've heard me talk about in the past the need for us to have an active citizenry. Sometimes, that's messy and controversial, and it gets people angry and frustrated. But I'd rather have young people who are engaged in the argument and trying to think through how they can be part of our democratic process than people who are just sitting on the sidelines and not paying attention at all.

And my suspicion is, is that over time, he's going to refine how he's thinking about it, and maybe some of his critics will start seeing that he has a point around certain concerns about justice and equality. And that's how we move forward. Sometimes, it's messy, but it's the way democracy works. All right?

Last one. Angela Greiling-Keane of Bloomberg.

International Corporate Tax Avoidance/Steel Industry/International Economy

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. The G–20 group today discussed the importance of tax fairness and consistency among countries. For you, how much of that discussion was centered on the Apple case and the EU's decision? And how do you balance your efforts here to ensure global tax fairness with your need and desire to protect U.S. companies and their shareholders?

The President. Yes.

Q. And if I may, on one other business topic, how would you assess the likelihood of the actions taken on steel today of making a difference in overcapacity?

The President. Good. No, those are both great questions. This issue of tax avoidance and tax evasion is something that we have actively promoted as an issue for the G–20 to tackle. We've worked with not only the G–20 countries, but also some of the multilateral organizations, like the OECD, to refine how we can approach these problems. It's a complicated piece of business.

We did not bring up the specific case of Apple, because as a general rule, I don't want to bring up a single case in a forum like this, where we're trying to shape broader policy. But at home, we have been focused—whether it's on the inversion rules that we put forward, the proposals that we put forward to define who the beneficiaries are behind the veil so that we can catch people who are avoiding their taxes—we're doing a bunch of stuff at home, and we want to coordinate better norms internationally.

The one thing that we have to make sure we do is to move in concert with other countries, because there's always a danger that if one of us acts unilaterally, that it's not just a matter of a U.S. company being impacted, but it may also have an effect in terms of our ability to collect taxes from that same company. And so you might end up with a situation where they pay into Europe, and U.S.—the U.S. Treasury is shortchanged. So, if there is not some coordination between various tax authorities, you get a problem there.

In the same way that we think there has to be some coordination about even some of our closest allies racing to the bottom in terms of how they enforce their tax policies in ways that lead to revenue shifting and tax avoidance in our country.

So this is not something that I think is going to be sorted out overnight. I do think that if we are to regain the trust of ordinary people that the system is not rigged and deal with these trends of inequality that have risen out of globalization and technological change, that we've got to make sure we tackle this issue in an effective way.

And we've made some progress, but not as much as we need to. And my hope is, is that it's recognized that it's in the interest of all countries, whether they're developed countries or developing countries, to work together to put a stop to this. Because developed countries are losing revenue, and that erodes their tax base and their ability to educate kids and build universities and build infrastructure, but it also wallops developing countries because oftentimes, tax avoidance can go hand in hand with corrupt practices that impede development.

In terms of excess capacity, this is an issue that we wanted to get on the agenda. We got it on the agenda. In my bilateral conversations with President Xi, there was an agreement that we would make progress on dealing with steel overcapacity, which, by the way, is consistent with the plans that President Xi himself has had to reorient the economy so that it's not so heavily dependent on state-owned enterprises and an export model.

So we've made some progress—not as much as we'd like to see—but some progress on that front bilaterally. Multilaterally, the way this was resolved was, the G–20 agreed to put together an intensive process of gathering all the data, determining what the best steps are, which will then be reported in the G–20 in Hamburg next year. And I think there was a validation of the basic principle that, to the extent that overcapacity is the result not just of market forces, but specific policy decisions that are distorting a well-functioning market, that that needs to be fixed.

And so it was one of a number of examples that aren't always sexy and don't attract a lot of headlines of where issues that we've raised in the G–20 get adopted, and then a bunch of work gets done, and the following year, you start seeing action, and slowly, we strengthen and build up international norms.

If you look at the issue of IT and the digital economy, we were able to get the G–20 to adopt a range of principles about an open Internet, net neutrality, making sure that businesses and vendors and providers aren't discriminated across borders, reflecting a lot of the foundational principles that have led to this digital revolution over the last several years.

And that will, in turn, generate a bunch of new work. And there will still be conflicts about how people deal with censorship or how they deal with cybersecurity issues, but we chip away at it, and over time, what you get is sturdier international norms that everybody abides to and will help all countries grow and help people prosper.

So I'm—my parting words at the G–20 were, having watched this process over the last 8 years, I think we all have to recognize, these are turbulent times. A lot of countries are seeing volatile politics. Sometimes, you read the headlines, and you can get discouraged about whether the international community and leadership are able to shape solutions fast enough for the scale of the problems, whether it's migrants and refugees or climate change or terrorism or making sure the international economy is working for everybody. But then, when you look back over the course of 8 years, actually, you find out, things have gotten better, not always as fast as we'd like, but in significant ways.

You look at the progress we've made on the financial system. The American banking system now has $700 billion more in capital; it is much safer and much sturdier. But it's not just us. Because of the G–20, you also have a Basel III agreement in which all countries are having to strengthen their capital requirements and put in place some basic safeguards to prevent what happened at Lehmans. And that's true across the board.

So, as always, I'd always like to see even more get done, but I'm cautiously optimistic about the progress that we made. I tell my staff when they feel worn out sometimes that better is always good. It may not be everything that needs to get done, but if it's better than before we started, we'll take it. All right?

Thank you very much, everybody.

[*At this point, many reporters began speaking at once.*]

Thank you, guys. Got to go.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 7:30 p.m. in Ballroom C at the JW Marriott Hotel Hangzhou. In his remarks, the President referred to President Bashar al-Asad of Syria; Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany; and President François Hollande of France. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Remarks at a State Luncheon Hosted by President Bounnyang Vorachit of Laos in Vientiane, Laos
September 6, 2016

[*President Bounnyang made brief remarks. He spoke in Lao, but no transcript was provided because the translation was inaudible.*]

President Obama. Mr. President, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of myself and my entire delegation, thank you so much for the warm welcome you've extended to us today.

In addition to the work that we are doing together, I very much look forward to experiencing the culture and the cuisine of Laos. I understand there's a saying in Laos that "sweet makes you dizzy, and bitter makes you healthy," and I'm looking forward to being both healthy and maybe a little dizzy as well by the end of this meal.

As the first U.S. President to visit this nation, I know my visit comes at a very important time. I won't make long remarks here; I'll be speaking later this afternoon. But for now, let me simply say how much I hope that our new partnership will mean greater progress and opportunity for the people of Laos.

I understand that there's a ceremony that's often performed here that's based on the idea that the body has 32 souls and in bad times some souls go missing. Blessings are given when they return and when the body is whole again.

So I propose a toast to the dignity and the future of the people of Laos and to Mr. President and the Government, as well as the people: May this visit and our work together be another step towards making the relationship between our two countries whole again.

Som seuy.

[*At this point, President Obama offered a toast.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:17 a.m. in the Dok Boua Ban Room at the Presidential Palace. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Joint Statement—Joint Declaration Between the United States of America and the Lao People's Democratic Republic
September 6, 2016

1. On the occasion of his historic state visit to Lao P.D.R., President Barack Obama and President Bounnhang Vorachit held talks today in Vientiane where they officially inaugurated the Comprehensive Partnership between the Lao P.D.R. and the United States of America. Through this partnership, the United States and the Lao P.D.R. are opening a new era of bilateral relations based on mutual respect, common interests and a shared desire to heal the wounds of the past to build a foundation for the future.

2. President Obama and President Bounnhang Vorachit decided to form a U.S.-Lao P.D.R. Comprehensive Partnership for advancing the relationship. They underlined the principles of the U.S.-Lao P.D.R. Comprehensive Partnership, including respect for the United Nations Charter, international law, and each other's political systems, independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. They stated that the Comprehensive Partnership is intended to contribute to peace, stability, cooperation, and prosperity in each country, in the region, and in the world. The new Comprehensive Partnership will create mechanisms for cooperation in areas including political and diplomatic relations, trade and economic ties, science and technology, education and training, environment and health, humanitarian cooperation, war legacy issues, security, protection and promotion of human rights, and people-to-people ties.

Political and Diplomatic Cooperation

3. As part of the U.S.-Lao P.D.R. Comprehensive Partnership, the two sides committed to increase high-level exchanges as well as contacts at all levels, and to intensify dialogue and cooperation mechanisms. President Obama affirmed the United States' support for Lao P.D.R.'s independence, sovereignty, prosperity, and integration into the international community. President Bounnhang Vorachit welcomed the United States' enhanced cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, which contributes to the peace, stability, and prosperity of the region.

4. The two leaders welcomed the establishment of a regular dialogue between their foreign ministries, and encouraged dialogues and exchanges between entities associated with political parties in both countries.

5. President Obama and President Bounnhang Vorachit committed to enhance cooperation at regional and international fora including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the East Asia Summit (EAS), and the ASEAN Defense Ministerial Meeting Plus (ADMM+) to support peace, stability, cooperation, and development in the Asia-Pacific region. The two leaders reaffirmed their support for the settlement of disputes by peaceful means in accordance with international law. They also reaffirmed their support for not resorting to the threat or use of force in resolving disputes.

6. Both leaders welcomed the progress made under the Lower Mekong Initiative (LMI) and Friends of the Lower Mekong (FLM) in recent years. Therefore, the two presidents reaffirmed their governments' commitment to work closely together, along with other LMI and FLM members, to further strengthen cooperation through the effective implementation of projects and programs under the LMI Master Plan of Action 2016–2020 and the Sustainable Infrastructure Partnership, to enhance regional connectivity and narrow the development gaps among member countries as well as promote sustainable socio-economic development and the well-being of people in the Mekong region.

War Legacy Issues

7. President Obama and President Bounnhang Vorachit confirmed that comprehensive cooperation in addressing war legacy issues to deepen mutual trust has allowed both countries to develop a relationship that looks to the future. To address the impact caused by unexploded ordnance (UXO) in Laos, President Obama announced that the United States intends to contribute $90 million over three years for a national UXO survey and clearance of UXO in Laos. President Bounnhang Vorachit welcomed the U.S. government's continued commitment to clear UXO, assist UXO victims, prevent future casualties, and develop local capacity to ensure sustainability of this work.

Humanitarian Cooperation

8. President Obama expressed his appreciation for the Lao P.D.R.'s continued cooperation in providing for the fullest possible accounting for U.S. personnel missing from the war, including its recent steps to increase the efficiency of joint search efforts. The two sides would continue to meet semi-annually for technical discussions on mission planning and strive to complete the mission in a timely and efficient manner.

Trade and Economic Ties

9. President Obama and President Bounnhang Vorachit welcomed the signing earlier this year of a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement between the two countries. The Agreement will strengthen trade ties and form a basis for expanding streams of commerce between the two nations.

10. The two leaders recognized the importance of protecting the most vulnerable populations while pursuing economic development and upholding international labor standards, including combatting child labor, forced labor, and human trafficking.

11. President Obama welcomed President Bounnhang Vorachit's commitment to pursuing steps to uphold international labor standards that could pave the way for the United States to grant the Lao P.D.R. benefits under the Generalized System of Preferences.

Education Cooperation

12. President Obama and President Bounnhang Vorachit affirmed the need to enhance educational, cultural, and people-to-people ties between the United States and Lao P.D.R. President Obama announced an initial basic education program, which focuses on improving early grade reading outcomes, and that Laos would be a Let Girls Learn Challenge Fund country, which would make Laos eligible for additional U.S. government funding for adolescent girls education. The two leaders noted the positive outcomes of the ongoing U.S. Government-funded School Feeding Program, for which the U.S. Government is currently providing over $27 million in funding over five years. They remarked on the rapid growth of English language programs in Lao P.D.R. and confirmed that close cooperation on education and training are critical elements to the next phase of the relationship. The leaders noted that robust English language instruction would contribute to the Lao P.D.R.'s effective collaboration with other ASEAN nations for their mutual educational, cultural and social development as well as its competitiveness in the 21st century global economy. President Obama and President Bounnhang Vorachit noted the success of bilateral education and exchange initiatives, especially the Fulbright program. The leaders noted the need for continued discussions on a Peace Corps program in Laos.

Health and Nutrition

13. The two leaders welcomed the establishment of the Lao-American Nutrition Institute, which will align with Laos's efforts to meet its Sustainable Development Goals, and ensure Lao children receive the nutrition they need for healthy lives. They also took note of a new three-year, $6 million USAID program that will improve community sanitation and mother and infant feeding practices in targeted districts, in line with the Lao government's Multi-Sectoral Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan. President Obama reaffirmed the United States' commitment to providing further medical and other care and assistance for persons with disabilities, regardless of cause. President Bounnhang Vorachit expressed his appreciation for the U.S. government's continued support through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) for Lao P.D.R.'s efforts to build sustainable systems for HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care.

14. President Obama and President Bounnhang Vorachit made a commitment to jointly advance the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA), including formally endorsing the GHSA and through bilateral efforts to develop a five-year roadmap to bolster national capacity in Laos to prevent, detect, and respond to biological threats and to fully implement the International Health Regulations. As part of this commitment, Laos will join the GHSA multilateral effort in 2016 and will undergo and publish a Joint External Evaluation (JEE) of its national capabilities. The United States has recently undergone and publically shared the results of its JEE.

Environment

15. President Obama and President Bounnhang Vorachit affirmed the importance of addressing climate change and resolved to support robust and transparent implementation of the historic Paris Agreement. Following the United States formally joining the Paris Agreement, President Bounnhang Vorachit stated that the Lao P.D.R. has completed its domestic procedures to ratify the Paris Agreement and will formally join the Agreement this year. Both leaders called on all nations to support the Agreement's rapid entry into force in 2016. Both leaders affirmed their commitment to adopt an ambitious and comprehensive hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) phase-down amendment in 2016 within the Montreal Protocol, and support the adoption of a global market-based measure at the upcoming Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization for implementation from 2020.

16. President Obama and President Bounnhang Vorachit welcomed increasing bilateral coopera-

tion to promote sustainable development and management of hydropower and forestry resources, as well as adaptation to climate change and response to natural disasters. The two countries pledged to promote a low greenhouse gas development pathway, including clean power sources that minimize environmental and climate impacts.

17. The two leaders also committed to work together, along with their LMI partners, to promote scientific research, capacity-building, investment, and dialogue to ensure the sustainable development of the Mekong River. They committed to increase cooperation to reduce wildlife trafficking and other environmental crimes, in accordance with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Security

18. President Obama and President Bounnhang Vorachit confirmed that the United States and Lao P.D.R. would continue to cooperate on defense and security through annual Bilateral Defense Dialogues and associated working groups. The two Presidents committed to expand mutually beneficial cooperation to enhance capabilities such as UXO clearance, search and rescue and disaster response. The two sides also underscored the importance of enhanced cooperation in non-traditional security matters and confirmed that they would work more closely to counter terrorism; combat transnational crime including narcotics, human, and wildlife trafficking; and address high-tech crime and cyber security.

Promotion and Protection of Human Rights

19. President Obama and President Bounnhang Vorachit took note of the benefits of a candid and open dialogue to enhance mutual understanding and narrow differences on human rights. They emphasized the importance of protection and promotion of human rights, the rule of law, and the rights of religious believers. In this regard, President Obama noted the crucial role of civil society. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to uphold the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The United States and Lao P.D.R. also committed to include informal consultation on human rights within the annual Comprehensive Bilateral Dialogue.

People-to-People Ties

20. President Bounnhang Vorachit and President Obama highlighted the importance of enhanced cooperation through strengthening people-to-people ties. They took note of the positive contributions that the people of the Lao P.D.R. and the United States, including the Lao-American community, can make to the strengthening of bilateral ties. The two leaders encouraged more people-to-people exchanges that focus on solving shared global challenges, with particular focus on encouraging youth leadership and entrepreneurship.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks in Vientiane, Laos
September 6, 2016

The President. Thank you so much. Thank you. *Sabaidii!*

Audience members. Sabaidii.

The President. Sabaidii bor?

Audience members. Sabaidii.

The President. To the Government and the people of Laos, thank you so much for the kind welcome that you've extended to me and my delegation. I am very honored to be the first American President to visit Laos. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Now, I am told that this hall is where you come together for the national singing contest. And I know that you celebrate your musical traditions, including *kap lam*. But I'm not going to sing today—[*laughter*]—so you should not worry. As you host leaders from across Southeast Asia and beyond, I do want to thank

Laos for your leadership as this year's chair of ASEAN.

Today the eyes of the world are on Laos. And I know that that may be a little unusual, because Laos is a small nation next to larger neighbors and, as a result, too often, the richness of your culture has not been fully appreciated. And that's why, as part of my visit, I'm grateful for the opportunity to know Laos better and to help share your story with the world.

I know that here, you cherish the beauty of the land, the mist-covered mountains and sunsets over the Mekong, the achievements of ancient civilizations that echo in the ruins of Vat Phou, and palm leaf manuscripts that are preserved at your temples. Tomorrow I'll experience some of this heritage myself when I visit Luang Prabang. I only regret that—I know this is called the Land of a Million Elephants, but Secret Service will not let me ride an elephant. [*Laughter*] But maybe I'll come back when I'm no longer President. [*Laughter*]

But in countless stupas and in your daily lives, we see the strength that draws so many of you from your Buddhist faith, a faith that tells you that you have a moral duty to each other, to live with kindness and honesty, and that we can help end suffering if we embrace the right mindset and the right actions. And in literature like the epic of Sinxay, we see the values that define the people of Laos, which is modesty and compassion and resilience and hope.

At our luncheon today, I was treated to the best of Lao culture and cuisine, including *khao niaw*. I did not get any Beerlao, but I will try some later—[*laughter*]—maybe this evening. And in all of you here today—and especially the young people of Laos—we see the diversity that is the strength of this nation. You have Lao and Khmu and Hmong and a tapestry of proud ethnic groups and indigenous peoples. So you are truly a people of the heart, and I thank you for welcoming me with such generosity, your *nam jai*.

I realize that having a U.S. President in Laos would have once been unimaginable. Six decades ago, this country fell into civil war. And as the fighting raged next door in Vietnam, your neighbors and foreign powers, including the United States, intervened here. As a result of that conflict and its aftermath, many people fled or were driven from their homes. At the time, the U.S. Government did not acknowledge America's role. It was a secret war, and for years, the American people did not know. Even now many Americans are not fully aware of this chapter in our history, and it's important that we remember today.

Over 9 years, from 1964 to 1973, the United States dropped more than 2 million tons of bombs here in Laos, more than we dropped on Germany and Japan combined during all of World War II. It made Laos, per person, the most heavily bombed country in history. As one Laotian said, the "bombs fell like rain." Villages and entire valleys were obliterated. The ancient Plain of Jars was devastated. Countless civilians were killed. And that conflict was another reminder that, whatever the cause, whatever our intentions, war inflicts a terrible toll, especially on innocent men, women, and children. Today I stand with you in acknowledging the suffering and sacrifices on all sides of that conflict.

And from the anguish of war, there came an unlikely bond between our two peoples. Today, the United States is home to many proud Laotian Americans. Many have made a hard journey through refugee camps and relocation, building new lives in a new country. And even as they've become Americans, they've held on to their Lao heritage: worshipping in their temples, honoring their elders, dancing the *lamvong*. Even now they remember a beloved song: that "if we depart from our homeland and flee far away from her, we will always have you as our true friend as long as we live." And as a new generation has come of age, more Laotian Americans have made the journey here to their ancestral homeland. Said one of them who was born in Vientiane, our "heart and home have always been in Laos." And this spirit of reconciliation is what brings me here today.

Our two governments will continue to have differences. That's true with many nations. As we do around the world, the United States will continue to speak up on behalf of what we con-

sider universal human rights, including the rights of the people of Laos to express yourselves freely and decide your own future. Yet, even as our governments deal candidly with our differences, I believe, as we have shown from Cuba to Burma to Vietnam, the best way to deliver progress for all of our peoples is by closer cooperation between our countries. And that's why today the United States and Laos have agreed to a new comprehensive partnership to guide and deepen our relationship for years to come.

Our partnership recognizes that the Lao People's Democratic Republic is an independent, sovereign nation. The United States does not seek to impose our will on Laos. Rather, we seek a relationship based on mutual respect, including respect for your independence and your sovereignty.

Our new partnership will continue to deal with the painful legacy of war. And on behalf of the American people, especially our veterans and military families, I thank the Government and the people of Laos for your humanitarian cooperation as we've worked together to account for Americans missing in action. And I'm pleased that, as a result of this visit, we will increase our efforts and bring more of our missing home to their families in America.

I also know that the remnants of war continue to shatter lives here in Laos. Many of the bombs that were dropped were never exploded. Over the years, thousands of Laotians have been killed or injured: farmers tending their fields, children playing. The wounds—a missing leg or arm—last a lifetime. And that's why, as President, I've dramatically increased our funding to help remove these unexploded bombs. As a result, Laos is clearing more bombs, fewer Laotians are being hurt or killed, and together, we are saving lives.

But there is still much more work to do. So today I'm proud to announce a historic increase in these efforts. The United States will double our annual funding to $90 million over the next 3 years to help Laos expand its work. This will help Laos expand its work to remove even more bombs, allow Laotians to farm more land, and increase support for victims. I'll bear witness to this work tomorrow when I meet with survivors.

Now, given our history here, I believe that the United States has a moral obligation to help Laos heal. And even as we continue to deal with the past, our new partnership is focused on the future. We want to be your partners as you invest in the well-being of your people and especially your children. I believe that when any child anywhere goes hungry, when their growth is stunted, that's a profound injustice. So we're joining with Laos to promote nutrition and bring more healthy meals to children in school so they can grow strong, focus in class, and realize their full potential.

We want to be your partner in improving education. I'm told that there's a saying here: "A tray full of silver is not worth a mind full of knowledge." So we'll help more children learn how to read. We'll bring more American teachers here to help teach English and more Lao teachers to America to strengthen their English. And I'm proud to announce that an initiative that's very important to me and to my wife Michelle, an initiative called "Let Girls Learn," is coming to Laos and Nepal. We believe that the daughters of Laos have just as much talent and potential as your sons. And none of our countries anywhere in the world can truly succeed unless our girls and our women have every opportunity to succeed, the same opportunities as boys and men do.

We want to be your partner with the young people of Laos as you strengthen your communities and start businesses and use Facebook to raise awareness for the rights and dignity of all people. And that's why, as part of our Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative, we're helping young men and women across Laos develop the skills you need to succeed. Two of our top companies, Microsoft and General Electric, are helping to increase training in engineering and technology. Young people in Laos shouldn't have to move someplace else in order to prosper. You should be able to work and build a better life right here in Laos.

And we want to be your partners as Laos forges greater trade and commerce with the world. When other countries invest here, it

should create jobs here for the people of Laos. So, as Laos pursues economic and labor reforms, we'll work to encourage more trade and investment between our two countries and between Laos and the rest of this region. As a result of my visit, I hope that more Americans come here as well, to experience your country and the beautiful culture and to forge new friendships between our peoples.

As Laos grows, we want to be your partner in protecting the natural beauty of your country, from your forests to your rivers. As Laos works to meet its growing need for energy, I want to work with you to pursue clean, renewable energies like solar. And let's help farmers protect their crops and villages adapt to a changing climate. We should work together so that development is sustainable, especially along the Mekong, upon which millions of people depend for their livelihood and their food and their health. The Mekong is a treasure that has to be protected for future generations, and we want to be your partner in that process.

So this is the future our two countries can build together, and I'm optimistic that we can do it. I'm confident because my visit is part of a broader agenda. As some of you know, as President, a key priority of my foreign policy has been to deepen our engagement with the nations and peoples of the Asia-Pacific. And here, on the final leg of my last visit to Asia as President, I want to discuss why the commitment of the United States to this region will endure for the long term.

America's interest in the Asia-Pacific is not new. It's not a passing fad. It reflects fundamental national interests. And in the United States, across the political spectrum, there's widespread recognition that the Asia-Pacific will become even more important in the century ahead, both to America and to the world. In this region, we see hundreds of millions of young people with high expectations for their lives. With many of our major trading partners and most of the world's growing middle class, growth here can mean more jobs and opportunity in all countries. This region is home to 5 of our treaty allies and some of the world's most capable militaries, which means Asia will shape the course of global security. And this region is home to more than half of humanity: Asian nations, developing and developed, who will be essential in the fight against challenges like climate change.

So, for all these reasons, I've worked to rebalance our foreign policy so the United States is playing a larger and long-term role in the Asia-Pacific region. We've strengthened our alliances. With our new defense guidelines, Japan and the United States will do even more together to uphold regional security. We've expanded our collaboration with the Republic of Korea, including on missile defense to counter North Korean threats. Today I'll be meeting with President Park to reaffirm our unbreakable alliance and to insist that the international community remain united so that North Korea understands that its provocations will only continue to deepen its isolation. With our U.S. marines now rotating through Australia, we can respond even faster to regional challenges. And with our new access agreement with the Philippines, our militaries are closer than they've been in decades.

To keep the peace and deter aggression, we've deployed more of our most advanced military capabilities to the region, including ships and aircraft to Singapore. And by the end of the decade, a majority of our Navy and Air Force fleets will be based out of the Pacific. And our allies and partners are collaborating more with each other as well. So our alliances and defense capabilities in the Asia-Pacific are as strong as they've ever been.

We've also forged deeper ties with emerging economies and emerging powers. With Indonesia and Malaysia, we're promoting entrepreneurship. We're opposing violent extremism, and we're addressing environmental degradation. With my recent visit to Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, we've shown our commitment to fully normalizing our relationship with Vietnam. We've elevated our ties with India across the board, and we welcome India's growing role in the Asia-Pacific.

We've deepened our cooperation with regional institutions, especially here in Southeast Asia. And as part of our new strategic partner-

ship with ASEAN, we've agreed to key principles, including that ASEAN will remain central to peace, prosperity, and progress in the Asia-Pacific. The United States is now part of the East Asia Summit, and together, we've made it the leading forum in the region for addressing political and security challenges, including maritime security.

We've increased the trade and investment that create jobs and opportunity on both sides of the Pacific. Since I took office, we've boosted U.S. exports to the Asia-Pacific by 50 percent. Our Young Leaders Initiative is helping more than 100,000 young men and women across this region start new companies and ventures. So we're connecting entrepreneurs and investors and businesses in America and in ASEAN with each other. And thanks to our sustained leadership, 12 of our nations have come together in the Trans-Pacific Partnership to establish the rules of trade for nearly 40 percent of the global economy.

We've also stood with citizens on behalf of democracy and human rights. We've expanded our support for civil society groups and open government. We saw another democratic election and transition in Indonesia. And as the first U.S. President to visit Myanmar, I am proud that the United States encouraged and now is supporting a historic transition toward democracy. And I look forward to welcoming State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi to the White House next week as we stand with the people of Myanmar in their journey towards pluralism and peace.

And alongside all these efforts, we've worked to build a constructive relationship with China. Our two governments continue to have serious differences in important areas. The United States will remain unwavering in our support for universal human rights, but at the same time, we've shown that we can work together to advance mutual interests. The United States and China are engaged across more areas than ever before, from preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, to our shared commitment to denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula, to our historic leadership together on climate change.

So I will say it again: The United States welcomes the rise of a China that is peaceful and stable and prosperous and a responsible player in global affairs, because we believe that that will benefit all of us.

In other words, the United States is more deeply engaged across the Asia-Pacific than we have been in decades. Our position is stronger. And we've sent a clear message that, as a Pacific nation, we're here to stay. In good times and bad, you can count on the United States of America.

And the question going forward is, what will the future hold for this region? Will disagreements be resolved peacefully or lead to conflict? Will economies continue to integrate or succumb to mercantilism or protectionism? Will human dignity be upheld, or will it be denied? Will the international rules and norms that have enabled progress in this region be maintained, or will they erode?

So, with the time I have left, allow me to share our vision, the values that guide us, and the future we're working toward: our basic principles for peace and progress here in this region, including Laos, and across the Asia-Pacific.

First, we believe that all nations and peoples deserve to leave—live in security and peace. We believe that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of every nation must be upheld. And we believe that every nation matters, no matter their size. We believe that bigger nations should not dictate to smaller nations and that all nations should play by the same rules. America's treaty allies must know our commitment to your defense is a solemn obligation that will never waiver. And across the region, including in the East and South China Seas, the United States will continue to fly and sail and operate wherever international law allows and support the right of all countries to do the same.

We will stand with our allies and partners in upholding fundamental interests, among them freedom of navigation and overflight, lawful commerce that's not impeded, and peaceful resolution of disputes. That's the security that we seek.

We also believe that just as nations have rights, nations also have responsibilities, including the responsibility to work together to address problems no nation can solve alone. So many of today's threats transcend borders, and every country has a role to play. We will have to cooperate better together to stop terrorist attacks and to prevent the spread of the world's most dangerous weapons. We will have to work together to avoid the worst effects of climate change. We have to work together to stop the horror of human trafficking and end the outrage of modern-day slavery. These are areas where we seek deeper cooperation.

We believe in prosperity that is shared and that reduces poverty and inequality by lifting up the many and not just a few wealthy people at the top. Rather than simply extracting another country's natural resources, we believe development has to invest in people: in their education and in their skills. We believe that trade should be free and truly fair and that workers and the environment should be protected. We believe that governments should not conduct or knowingly support cyber-enabled theft of intellectual property for commercial gain. And we believe that there needs to be good governance, because people should not have to pay a bribe to start a business or sell their goods. And that's the kind of development and the kind of trade that we seek.

That's why the Trans-Pacific Partnership is so important: not only because TPP countries, including the United States, will be able to sell more goods to each other, but it also has important strategic benefits. TPP is a core pillar of America's rebalance to the Asia-Pacific. And the trade and the growth it supports will reinforce America's security alliances and regional partnerships. It will build greater integration and trust across this region. And I have said before, and I will say again: Failure to move ahead with TPP would not just have economic consequences, but would call into question America's leadership in this vital region. So, as difficult as the politics are back home, I will continue to push hard on the U.S. Congress to approve TPP before I leave office, because I think it is important for this entire region and it is important for the United States.

I believe that nations are stronger and more successful when they uphold human rights. We speak out for these rights not because we think our own country is perfect; no nation is. But—not because we think every country should do as we do, because each nation has to follow its own path. But we will speak up on behalf of human rights because we believe they are the birthright of every human being. And we know that democracy can flourish in Asia because we've seen it thrive from Japan and South Korea to Taiwan.

Across this region, we see citizens reaching to shape their own futures. And freedom of speech and assembly and the right to organize peacefully in civil society without harassment or fear of arrest or disappearing, we think makes a country stronger. A free press that can expose abuse and injustice makes a country stronger. And access to information and an open Internet where people can learn and share ideas makes a country stronger. An independent judiciary that upholds the rule of law and free and fair elections so that citizens can choose their own leaders—these are all the rights that we seek for all people.

We believe that societies are more stable and just when they recognize the inherent dignity of every human being: the dignity of being able to live and pray as you choose, so that Muslims know they are a part of Myanmar's future and Christians and Buddhists have the right to worship freely in China; the dignity of being treated equally under the law so that no matter where you come from or who you love or what you look like, you are respected; and the dignity of a healthy life, because no child should ever die from hunger or a mosquito bite or the poison of dirty water. This is the justice that we seek in the world.

And finally, we believe that the ties between our nations must be rooted in friendship and trust between our peoples. I think of several Laotian Americans whose families came to the United States as refugees. Our nations are connected not just by policies, but also by people like John Douangdara, whose family settled in

our State of Nebraska, and after high school joined our military, served with our elite special forces, and ultimately gave his life for our Nation. His mother said, "He is a son of the Lao people." And he sacrificed for us, and we honor him.

We're connected by Channapha Khamvongsa, who came to America when she was 7 years old and who is back here today. And for years, she urged the United States to do more to help remove unexploded bombs here in Laos. "There are many, many problems in this world that might not be able to be solved in a lifetime," she's said, but this is one we can fix. So, Channapha, we thank you for working to fix this problem.

And we're connected by Stacey Phengvath, who is here as well and who I met earlier. Her parents came to America and stressed the importance of education. And today, this proud Laotian American serves at our Embassy here in Laos. "I feel a sense of home," she says, "as if I have known this country before, through my parents." It feels "like we've come full circle." So, Stacey, on behalf of all of us, thank you for helping to bring our countries closer together.

So these are the values that guide us. And this is the partnership that America offers here in Laos and across the Asia-Pacific: respect for your sovereignty, security and peace through cooperation, investment in the health of children, education for students, support for entrepreneurs, development and trade that creates jobs for all of us and protects our environment, a commitment to rights and dignity that is borne out of our common humanity.

This is our vision. This is the future we can realize together. And based on my visit to Laos and the proud work of the past 8 years, I believe that Americans and the peoples of the Asia-Pacific will be able to say to each other, as the song goes, "we will always have you as our true friend as long as we live." *Khop jai lai lai*. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:04 p.m. in the main auditorium of Lao National Cultural Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Pom Khampradith, director of the Pacific Northwest chapter, Lao Heritage Foundation; Sengchanh Douangdara, mother of PO1 John Douangdara, USN, who was killed in action in Wardak Province, Afghanistan, on August 8, 2011; Channapha Khamvongsa, executive director, Legacies of War; and Stacey Phengvath, office management specialist, U.S. Embassy in Vientiane.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Park Geun-hye of South Korea in Vientiane
September 6, 2016

President Obama. It is always a pleasure to meet with my friend and partner, President Park of the Republic of Korea, and her delegation. As we all know, the R.O.K. is one of America's oldest and closest allies. Our alliance remains the linchpin of peace and security, not just on the Korean Peninsula, but across the region.

In recent years, we've worked together to strengthen our alliance and to ensure our readiness against any threat. For instance, our missile defense cooperation, THAAD, is a purely defensive system to deter and defend against North Korean threats. And today I want to reaffirm that our commitment to the defense and security of North [South]* Korea, including extended deterrence, is unwavering.

We had extensive discussions about the recent provocations by the D.P.R.K., and we are united in condemning North Korea's continued missile launches, including this week while China was hosting the G–20. These launches are provocative. They're a violation of North Korea's obligations internationally. Its nuclear

* White House correction.

and missile programs are a threat to not only the R.O.K., but to Japan, other allies in the region, partners in the region, and to the United States.

So we are going to work diligently together with the most recent U.N. sanctions that are already placing North Korea under the most intense sanctions regime ever. We're going to work together to make sure that we're closing loopholes and making them even more effective. And President Park and I agree that the entire international community needs to implement these sanctions fully and hold North Korea accountable.

North Korea needs to know that provocations will only invite more pressure and further deepen its isolation, but that if it is willing to recognize its international obligations and the importance of denuclearization in the Korean Peninsula, the opportunities for us to dialogue with them are there. And we do not have any interest in an offensive approach to North Korea. We want peace and security for all peoples, but their current behavior has not been ones that are conducive to the kinds of dialogue and diplomacy that both the R.O.K. and the United States would prefer.

Beyond the region, our alliance is a global one. We stand together against ISIL. We stand together in providing humanitarian assistance for the Syrian people and for refugees, promoting global health, and fighting climate change. The R.O.K. has been an excellent partner in helping Afghanistan stabilize. It has been an outstanding partner on global health and security issues. We talked about the leadership summit that we'll be hosting at the end of this month on refugees and the important contributions that the Republic of Korea are making.

And let me just say that as I wrap up over the next several days my last trip to Asia, what a pleasure it's been to work with President Park and her team. They have been steady, consistent partners, and President Park has been a stalwart ally and friend on a whole range of issues. And her steady and wise leadership, I think, has greatly contributed to the strengthening of what was already one of our most important alliances. So I want to thank her personally for the excellent contributions she's made to advancing all the various issues that we've been working on. And I want to thank her team as well that worked very hard behind the scenes to make that happen.

President Park. Today I met with President Obama and held fruitful discussions on how we will respond to the common challenges that confront both our nations. In particular, it was a pleasure to reconfirm that the Korea-U.S. alliance is stronger than ever and is playing a pivotal role for the peace and stability of not only the Korean Peninsula, but the entire region.

North Korea's nuclear test earlier this year and continued missile launches are fundamentally threatening the security of both the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia. I would like to make it clear that Korea and the U.S. will respond resolutely to any provocations by North Korea by utilizing all means.

North Korea launched another missiles again yesterday. I send a stern warning that the continuation of such reckless provocations will lead North Korea down the path of self-destruction. I express my gratitude to President Obama once again for clearly expressing today the unwavering commitment of the U.S. for the defense of the Republic of Korea. President Obama and I have agreed to maintain a strong deterrence posture by enhancing our combined defense capabilities, to include the deployment of the THAAD system.

Next, the faithful implementation of the U.N. Security Council Resolution 2270 is vital to deterring North Korea's advancement of its nuclear and missile capabilities, and it is meaningful that our two countries have been engaged in close cooperation in this regard. The United States and Korea have agreed to faithfully implement U.N. Security Council resolutions and further strengthen our efforts to seal the loopholes and sanctions implementation even more tightly. Taking into consideration the importance of China's role in effective implementation of sanctions and the resolution process of the North Korean nuclear issue, our two countries have agreed to continue to communicate with China through various channels.

Regarding the human rights situation of North Korean people, I would like to express my appreciation for the efforts made by many in the United States, both in and out of government. And I plan to further strengthen cooperation with the United States and the international community on the basis of our North Korean Human Rights Act, which entered into force on September 4. The improvement of the human rights situation for North Korean people will be a critical stepping stone for our path toward unification, and unification will provide opportunities for North Korean people to be treated equally.

Lastly, in order for the Korea-U.S. alliance to contribute to a greater peace and broader prosperity, President and I have agreed to not only expand cooperation in new frontiers such as global health, climate change, and space, but also expand our roles in areas such as refugees, peacekeeping operations, and development cooperation. I find it meaningful that through our discussions today, I was able to confirm yet once again that the foundations of our bilateral relationship are rock solid.

I once again express my respect for President Obama, for the vision and leadership that he has shown for our alliance.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:01 p.m. at the Landmark Mekong Riverside Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) antiballistic missle system; and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. President Park spoke in Korean, and her remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Memorandum on the Emergency Leave Transfer Program for Federal Employees Adversely Affected by the Severe Storms and Flooding in Louisiana
September 6, 2016

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Emergency Leave Transfer Program for Federal Employees Adversely Affected by the Severe Storms and Flooding in Louisiana

I am deeply saddened by the devastating losses caused by the severe storms and historic flooding in Louisiana. The Federal Government has mobilized its resources to support Louisiana in response to and recovery from this major disaster. While Federal departments and agencies rally their capabilities to support these efforts, many of those same Federal employees are personally impacted by the storms in Louisiana and are dealing with overwhelming personal losses.

To further assist Federal employees and their family members adversely affected by the severe storms and flooding in Louisiana of August 2016, I hereby direct the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to establish an emergency leave transfer program, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 6391. The program will permit employees in the executive and judicial branches, or an agency leave bank established under 5 U.S.C. 6363, to donate unused annual leave for transfer to employees of the same or other agencies (or the judicial branch) who were adversely affected by the severe storms and flooding in Louisiana and who need additional time off for recovery. I further direct OPM to provide additional guidance to agencies on the program's administration.

BARACK OBAMA

Remarks at the Cooperative Orthotic and Prosthetic Enterprise (COPE) Visitor Centre in Vientiane, Laos
September 7, 2016

Good morning, everybody. As you saw, we've just had the opportunity to learn more about the very important work that's being done here at the COPE Centre and about the magnitude of the challenge posed by unexploded ordnance.

For many people, war is something that you read about in books. And you learn the names of battles, the dates of conflicts, and you look at maps and images that depict events from long ago. For the United States, one of the wars from our history is the conflict called the Vietnam war. It's a long and complicated conflict that took the lives of many brave young Americans. But we also know that despite its American name, what we call it, this war was not contained to Vietnam. It included many years of fighting and bombing in Cambodia and here in Laos. But for all those years in the 1960s and seventies, America's intervention here in Laos was a secret to the American people, who were separated by vast distances and a Pacific Ocean, and there was no Internet, and information didn't flow as easily.

For the people of Laos, obviously, this war was no secret. Over the course of roughly a decade, the United States dropped more bombs on Laos than Germany and Japan during World War II. Some 270 million cluster bomblets were dropped on this country. And you can see some of these displays showing everything that landed on relatively simple homes like this, and farms and rural areas. By some estimates, more bombs per capita were dropped on Laos than any other country in the world.

For the people of Laos, war was also something that was not contained to a battlefield. In addition to soldiers and supply lines, bombs that fell from the sky killed and injured many civilians, leaving painful absences for so many families.

For the people of Laos, the war did not end when the bombs stopped falling. Eighty million cluster munitions did not explode. They were spread across farmlands, jungles, villages, rivers. So, for the last four decades, Laotians have continued to live under the shadow of war. Some 20,000 people have been killed or wounded by this unexploded ordnance, or UXO.

For the people of Laos, then, these are not just statistics. These bomblets have taken the lives of farmers working in the fields, traders gathering scrap metal, children playing outside who thought these small, metal balls could be turned into a toy.

And for the people of Laos, this is also about the ability to make a good living. In communities that rely so much on agriculture, you can't reach your potential on land that is littered with UXOs. As one farmer said: "We need our land to be cleared of bombs. If it weren't for the bombs, I would multiply my production."

And we also know that the people of Laos are resilient. We see that determination in members of the clearance teams that we met, men and women who have worked for years—this very young lady says she's been at it for 20 years—all across this country to find UXO and eliminate them one by one. And I'm glad that we could be joined by them today.

We see the determination in the survivors of UXOs. Some of you heard me talking to Thoummy Silamphan, who joins us here today. When he was just a young child, he was badly wounded by a UXO explosion and lost his left hand. But rather than losing hope, he's dedicated his life to providing hope for others. Through his organization, the Quality of Life Association, Thoummy has helped survivors get medical care, find work, rebuild their lives with a sense of dignity.

And we see that determination in the many organizations like this one. Here at COPE, you provide assistance to those who have suffered because of UXO while shining a spotlight on the work that still has to be done. And in that effort, I'm very glad that America is your partner.

When I took office, we were spending $3 million each year to address the enormous challenge of UXO. We have steadily increased that amount, up to $15 million last year. This funding—together with the work of the Lao Government, UXO Lao, other international donors, and several nongovernmental organizations—has allowed us to fund clearance efforts while also developing plans for a nationwide survey that can help locate UXO and focus clearance efforts on areas that have the most potential for economic development.

So yesterday I was proud to announce a significant increase in America's commitment to this work. We will invest $90 million over the next 3 years to this effort. Our hope is that this funding can mark a decisive step forward in the work of rolling back the danger of UXO: clearing bombs, supporting survivors, and advancing a better future for the people of Laos.

As President of the United States, I believe that we have a profound moral and humanitarian obligation to support this work. We're a nation that was founded on the belief in the dignity of every human being. Sometimes, we've struggled to stay true to that belief, but that is precisely why we always have to work to address those difficult moments in history and to forge friendships with people who we once called enemies.

That belief in the value of every human being is what motivates the teams of Americans who have traveled to remote parts of this land to find the remains of hundreds of Americans who have been missing so that their families can receive some measure of comfort. That belief has to lead us to value the life of every young Lao boy and girl, who deserve to be freed from the fear of the shadow of a war that happened long ago.

Doing this work also builds trust. History does not have to drive us apart; it can sometimes pull us together. And addressing the most painful chapters in our history honestly and openly can create openings, as it has done in Vietnam, to work together on other issues so that violence is replaced by peaceful commerce, cooperation, and people-to-people ties.

And above all, acknowledging the history of war and how it's experienced concretely by ordinary people is a way that we make future wars less likely. We have to force ourselves to remember that war is not just about words written in books or the names of famous men and battles. War is about the countless millions who suffer in the shadows of war: the innocents who die and the bombs that remain unexploded in fields decades after.

Here in Laos, here at COPE, we see the victims of bombs that were dropped because of decisions made half a century ago, and we are reminded that wars always carry tremendous costs, many of them unintended. People have suffered, and we've also seen, though, how people can be resourceful and resilient. It helps us recognize our common humanity. And we can remember that most people want to live lives of peace and security. And we embrace the hope that out of this history, we can make decisions that lead to a better future for the people of Laos, for the United States, for the world.

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:44 a.m.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session at a Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative Town Hall Meeting in Luang Prabang, Laos
September 7, 2016

The President. Thank you! Thank you so much! *Sabaidii!*

Audience members. Sabaidii!

The President. Well, it is such a pleasure to be here. Can everybody please give Om a big round of applause for that great introduction?

So it is wonderful to be in Luang Prabang. I've always wanted to visit. It is said that this is where the Buddha smiled when he rested during his travels. And I can see why, because it is beautiful and relaxed. I've just come from seeing Wat Xieng Thong. Did I say that right?

Sort of. [*Laughter*] And it was beautiful. And the entire area is spectacular. I want to thank everyone at Souphanouvong for hosting me here today. And I want to thank the people of Laos. I've been deeply touched by the hospitality that you've shown me.

This is my 11th visit to Asia as President of the United States, but it's my first visit to Laos. And in fact, I am the first United States President ever to come here. And with the kindness that you've shown me, I'm sure I will not be the last. Other Presidents will want to come as well. [*Laughter*] And I promise you I will come back when I'm no longer President. [*Applause*] Yes. And the good thing about when I come back and I'm not President, I won't have so much security. [*Laughter*] And I can sit and relax and have some food, and I won't be so busy.

Now, whenever I travel around the world, I spend a lot of time doing business with world leaders, and I meet with the presidents of big companies. But I try to balance spending time with young people like you. And I gave a long speech yesterday, so I'm not going to do a long speech today. I want to have a conversation with you. I want to hear what you have to say. But I'm just going to make a few remarks.

I think you know that this part of the world means a lot to me because I lived in Indonesia as a boy. And my sister is half-Indonesian. She was born there. She married a man whose parents were from Malaysia. My mother worked in Southeast Asia for most of her life, working with women in villages to try to help them get more money through selling handicrafts and developing small businesses. So, as I drive around here, it's very familiar to me. It reminds me of my childhood. And my commitment to deepening America's ties to Southeast Asia is very real.

Now, that's why I'm the first U.S. President who has regularly met with ASEAN leaders. It's why we're working together to promote peace, protect human rights, encourage sustainable development, advance equality for women and girls, and to meet challenges like climate change and other environmental issues.

While Presidents and Prime Ministers can help lay the foundation, it's going to be young people like you who build the future of this region and the world. Here in Southeast Asia, almost two-thirds of you were born after 1980, which makes me feel very old. [*Laughter*] In Laos, half of you were born after 1995. And from Rangoon to Jakarta, Ho Chi Minh City to Kuala Lumpur, everywhere I go, I see the energy and the optimism of all the young people who live here. I've seen your desire to resolve conflicts through diplomacy and not war. I've seen your desire for prosperity through entrepreneurship and the rejection of corruption. I've seen your interest in promoting social harmony, not by discriminating against anyone in the community, but by upholding the rights of all people, regardless of what they look like or what religion they belong to.

And because your generation is the most educated and because you are all connected through your phones—[*laughter*]—you have more power to shape the future than any generation that we've ever known. And that's why I've made connecting our young people a cornerstone of American foreign policy.

Three years ago, we launched YSEALI, Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative. And what began as a small group of young people is now a network of 100,000 young people from all 10 ASEAN countries. And in fact, across Africa, the Americas, and Europe, we now have nearly half a million young people like you in our Young Leaders Initiative worldwide.

And our goal is to empower young people with skills and resources and the networks that you need to turn your ideas into action and to become the next generation of leaders in civil society and in business and in government. We have regional exchanges, workshops, online networking, hands-on training. We've offered grant competitions to support your efforts. We've welcomed hundreds of you to the United States to study in our universities and experience our State and local governments and to intern, spend time at our companies. And I've even hosted some of you at the White House.

So what we've wanted to do is to hear from you and for you to hear from each other how

you can share ideas and practices and, hopefully, forge partnerships and friendships that will last you a lifetime. And I've been so proud to see how you've made YSEALI such a success. Some of you have started projects to teach summer school and helped farmers markets grow. Some of you have worked to increase civic engagement. Some of you have been involved in economic development projects so that no country in ASEAN is left behind in today's economy.

And I know that closing the development gap in innovative and in impactful ways is what you're focused on at this YSEALI summit in Laos. And that's wonderful, because whatever sector we work in, we all have a role to play when it comes to things like educating our people, lifting communities up from poverty, and protecting the environment for future generations. I also understand that YSEALI alumni have come together to plan an event called YOUnified, which is a day of service across the region on December 3, and that will be the third anniversary of YSEALI.

So I could not be more impressed with all of you. This is change that's happening on a global scale. Young people are taking over. And I want to help it sustain itself. So today, in Luang Prabang, I have a few announcements to make that focus on what you're here to talk about, and that's development across the ASEAN region.

First, at a time when English is the language of business, science, and a networked world, it's very important that young people have English language training. And that's why today we're launching English for All. This is a program where we're going to bring more English teachers to your countries, including Laos, and bring more of your educators to America for training. And we're going to offer opportunities and resources to help anybody around the world learn English on a new website called englishforall.state.gov.

Second, we're focused on making sure that every girl earns a quality education. In too many countries now, women and girls are not getting the same educational opportunities as men and boys. And research shows that when girls get an education, not only do they grow up healthier, but her children will grow up healthier also. Not only will she become more prosperous, but her community will become more prosperous.

And that's why yesterday I announced that "Let Girls Learn"—this is a program that I'm working on, but more importantly, my wife is working on—[*laughter*]—is coming to two more countries: Laos and Nepal. And today we're announcing the new U.S.-ASEAN Women's Leadership Academy for YSEALI. Each year, this program will offer leadership training and mentoring for emerging women leaders from all 10 ASEAN countries. And because we've partnered with several multinational companies to sponsor this academy, we're going to be able to empower women to take their place in society for decades to come. So we're very excited about that.

So that's what we're doing. But ultimately, it's up to you as role models to inspire young people across this region. And before I take questions, I just want to highlight two YSEALI role models whose stories have really inspired me and I think will inspire you as well.

The first is Mimi Sae-Ju. Where is Mimi? [*Applause*] There you go, there's Mimi. So Mimi grew up in a Lisu village in Northern Thailand. When YSEALI brought her to our State of Montana in the United States she met some of our Native American tribes. And in their experience, it reminded her of her own people. So she decided "to show my people that ladies in America are doing the same things as them." So she founded the Lisu Cultural Heritage Center in Chiang Mai to promote and preserve the indigenous history of her people. And she sells handicrafts made by Lisu women, which helps them earn a living and makes sure that the culture lives on in future generations.

And, Mimi, is that some of the stuff that they're making? You should model it for us. [*Laughter*] It's very nice. Beautiful. And you got that hat in Montana, though, right?

YSEALI Fellow Amema "Mimi" Sae-Ju. Yes.

The President. There you go. Excellent.

Ms. Amema. [*Inaudible*]—Asian and U.S. relations—[*inaudible*].

The President. There you go. I like that. You've got a nice cowboy hat.

The second person I want to introduce is Dissa Ahdanisa. Where is—[*applause*]? So, after her experience in America through YSEALI, she said, "When I came back to Indonesia, I realized I love the United States not because of the fancy stuff, but because of the people and because of their kindness." And so I want you to know that the American people feel the same way about you.

But it was actually Dissa's time volunteering in Nicaragua a few years ago that set her on a new course. One day, she happened across a cafe for the deaf. And at first, she just wanted to learn a new language, in this case, the sign language spoken by the waiters and waitresses. She came to realize that cafe was a great way to empower people with a disability. She visited schools for the deaf, made deaf friends. Last year, Dissa opened the Fingertalk Cafe in Indonesia to provide job opportunities for the deaf community there. And I've been told great things about the cafe, because my receptionist, as you know, in the White House, a wonderful young woman named Leah, she visited earlier this year. She is deaf, and she is the receptionist at the White House. So, when you come visit the White House, she's the first person you meet. And she signs. And she said—she wanted me to tell you how proud she is of you. So congratulations.

So Dissa says she wants her country to be a place where people can "achieve dreams without restriction," where her daughter "can be who she wants to be . . . [and] inspire other people with what she's doing." And I'm inspired by what Dissa is doing, because here, on my final trip to Asia as President, I want to make sure that all of you keep on inspiring others the way these two young women are inspiring people in their countries and around the world.

And because we're in Laos, I'm going to finish with an inspiring story I heard last year about a Lao woman named Thongvone Sosamphan. I shared it with the YSEALI Fellows I welcomed to the White House. I hope you don't mind me sharing it again. Where is she? Is she here? I wasn't sure if she was here, but I'm going to tell her story anyway.

So, as part of YSEALI, Thongvone spent time in our city of Atlanta, and she visited the memorial and center honoring one of my heroes, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. And she said she was struck by what this great civil rights leader said. He said: "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, what are you doing for others?"

And that question made her think about the true meaning of leadership. And then she wrote something very beautiful: "Leadership is inside you. . . . Everyone can be a leader, because everyone can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to lead. You don't need to know more than others. All you need is a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love."

And that is what I see in all of you. And as long as I think you keep on trying to answer that question that Dr. King asked, what are you doing for others, then I'm sure you will be extraordinary leaders in your own country. And you will always have a friend and partner in the United States of America.

So thank you very much, everybody. And with that, let's take some questions and comments from our YSEALI network. All right?

So what I'm going to do is, I think we have microphones in the audience, and we will—I will call on people. I'm going to go—I'm going to call on boys and then girls and back and forth so that it's fair. [*Laughter*] And when I call on you, if you could introduce yourself, tell us where you're from, and tell us what you're doing. And then you can ask a question. Okay?

So let's start with this young lady right here. Yes, you. Here's a microphone. Oh, I'm sorry.

Role of Young People in Political and Economic Development

Q. Hello, Mr. President. I'm your big fan, actually. [*Laughter*] So my name is Tia. I'm from Indonesia. And it's a pleasure that you can come here. So my question is, in your opinion as a father and as a President, how im-

portant we, as a youth, to take a role in developing countries' development and changing? And also, how you measure it? Thank you.

The President. How—I'm sorry, what was the last one?

Q. Do you think, how important is—how important youth role is in developing country development and how you measure it as a President and as a father? Thank you.

The President. Well, I think that young people historically have always been the key to progress and development. Because if you think about it, old people like me—[*laughter*]—we do things the old way. We have—we're trapped by our own experience, and we look to the past so often and we think this is how things always should be. Young people, they're looking to the future, and so they're able to say, we don't have to do things the old way; we can do things new ways. And that's what creates new ideas, new businesses, new ways of organizing people, new ways of treating each other with more respect, rejecting some of the old habits.

Think about the U.S. relationship with Laos. For 9 years, there was a secret war in which the United States was dropping bombs on this country. And I just this morning came from a organization that is taking ordnance—explosives that did not detonate—and trying to remove them from the countryside. So, if you are an old person, that may be your image of the United States. If you're a young person, now you think we have the opportunity to work with the United States in a different way, and that creates new opportunities and new hope and new relationships.

So I think the challenge for young people is to find the skills and the resources to put your ideas into action. Because it's not enough just to dream about, I want to educate everybody in my country, or I want to build a great new business. You actually have to do the work, and you have to have plans. And it's hard. And so part of what we're trying to do is to provide resources to young people, but also help them learn from each other so that maybe there's a program—well, we just learned from Dissa, right? She saw a program in Nicaragua, and now it's in Indonesia. So now maybe somebody in Africa visits Southeast Asia, and they have a new idea about sustainable agriculture. Right? And part of what we want to do is to make sure that people are exchanging ideas all the time. And that's very valuable.

All right? Good. Well, I said I was going to call on a gentleman first, right? This young man in the uniform. That's a very fancy uniform—[*laughter*]—so we'll have to find out from him what——

Association of Southeast Asian Nations-U.S. Relations

Q. Okay. *Sawatdee krab*. Good afternoon. My name is Phillip—[*inaudible*]. I'm from Thailand. And my question is, in next 10 years, what do you expect ASEAN people to think about U.S.A., and why?

The President. Well, the—my hope is, is that the next President will continue my policy of meeting regularly with ASEAN leaders. We are working on a whole range of different issues, from how can we help develop health care networks so that people are getting better health care, but also so that we identify if there's a disease and we can stop it before it starts spreading; to disaster relief so that if there's a typhoon that there's local capacity to respond quickly; to economic development; to education. And some of these programs, they'll take some years before they bear fruit. And my hope is that 10 years from now, people will look back and they'll say that the engagement that we began with ASEAN now has developed so that we have a very mature and deep relationship in all areas.

And I believe that the United States is and can be a great force for good in the world. But because we're such a big country, we haven't always had to know about other parts of the world. If you are in Laos, you need to know about Thailand and China and Cambodia, because you're a small country and they're right next door and you need to know who they are. If you are the United States, sometimes, you can feel lazy and think we're so big—[*laughter*]—we don't have to really know anything about other people.

And that's part of what I'm trying to change, because this is actually the region that's going to grow faster than anyplace else in the world. It has the youngest population, and the economy is growing faster than anyplace. And if we aren't here interacting and learning from you and understanding the culture of the region, then we'll be left behind. We'll miss an opportunity. And I don't want to—that to happen.

Okay? Good. All right, let's see. This young lady right here.

Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative/The President's Plans After Leaving Office

Q. Oh, thank you. Thank you, sir.

The President. What's your name?

Q. My name is—[*inaudible*]. I am from Singapore. Yes. I like to ask since YSEALI means so much to you, how will you ensure that YSEALI continues after you step down?

The President. Well, it's a great question. There are two things that we're going to do. First of all, we're working with the State Department, my Foreign Ministry, so that YSEALI continues after I've left. The program to bring certain members of YSEALI to the United States, to maintain the networks, we're trying to institutionalize that so that it continues after I'm gone.

What I'm also going to do is, in my own work as an ex-President, I'm hoping to continue to work with young people through my Presidential Center. And so one of the components that I've discussed with my team is how I can continue to interact with the YSEALI alumni, and we can share ideas, and I can continue to meet with you, and we can work on projects together. So I'll continue to stay involved. But the YSEALI program itself we will continue to run through the State Department. And I'm confident that it will continue to do great things. Good. All right.

So, since were in Laos, let me see if—a Lao young man. Here we go, right here.

Q. Sabaidii.

The President. Sabaidii.

Education

Q. Good afternoon, Mr. President. Thank you for visiting us. My name is—[*inaudible*]. I wanted to ask you, if one thing, only one thing, can be changed in ASEAN, especially in Lao, what kind of the change do you want to see? And how will you contribute to that change? Thank you.

The President. No, it's a good question. Well, I think that if there's one thing that we've learned is that the most important thing for any country is its people. So, if there's one thing that I could help to bring about, it would be improving educational standards for young people throughout Laos and throughout ASEAN and, as I said before, making sure that that includes girls and not just boys.

Because if you look at the countries that are successful—let's just take ASEAN as an example—the country that has the highest standard of living is Singapore. Now, Singapore actually has very little. It doesn't have natural resources. It has ports, but it's a tiny country. And yet, economically, it is very successful. Well, why is that? Well, part of it is because its education levels are extremely high, and as a result, companies from around the world, they are interested in locating in places where they can find a workforce that is creative and smart and can do the job.

So it's wonderful if you have natural resources. It's wonderful if you're a big country with a large population. But ultimately, how successful a country is will depend on whether its people have the skills and the education and the vision to be able to use those resources effectively. And we're going to continue to work with all the countries in ASEAN so that we can constantly promote greater education and greater training.

Now, when I say education, by the way, I don't always just mean a high-level college degree. Technical training, training in a trade, that can be valuable as well. And in the United States—this is not just for ASEAN; this is in the United States as well. In the United States, we have some of the best universities in the world, but one of the things I've been empha-

sizing is, we also have what are called community colleges. They're not 4-year universities, they're 2-year—typically 2-year degrees. And you can be very successful going there and finding a specialized trade or learning a very specific skill that companies are hiring for.

And we want to give young people a range of options. Not everybody wants to study in a classroom and become a lawyer or a doctor. But it's also very valuable if you have somebody who's a really skilled electrician. We talk about high tech, and it's true that people who are designing software for the iPhone are the best engineers, but there are jobs in computer science where you don't need a 4-year degree. Coding is not actually that complicated once you learn how to do it. So we want to make sure that at every level young people have the ability to access a great education. And if we're able to do that, then I'm confident that ASEAN will be successful.

Okay? Yes, go ahead.

Racial, Ethnic, and Religious Pluralism/Human Rights

Q. Okay. Hello. My name is—[*inaudible*]. I'm from Indonesia. I'm asking a question on behalf of the YSEALI online audience. So this question is from my friend—[*inaudible*]—from Indonesia also. She asked about this: "Actually, America is a very big country, consists of various community of different tribes, religions, and also race. And how do you unite them into live peacefully side by side in accordance of the United States motto, *e pluribus unum*"?

The President. Oh, that's a great question. Thank you very much. Well, you're exactly right that the United States historically, unless you're a Native American, like those who Mimi met in Montana, you came from someplace else. Those of you who visit the United States, if you walk down the streets of Los Angeles or New York, you don't know what an American looks like because Americans could be anything. They could be any color, any religion, from—with a heritage from countries all around the world. And that's our great strength. Because one of the things that I strongly believe is that when people from different cultures interact, then you're always learning something, because people bring new ideas and new traditions.

And that's why in our big cities in America, you can get really good food from everywhere. And then sometimes, people come up with new food that's a mix of different foods. The same with music. If you think about rock and roll or hip-hop or any American—or jazz—any American music, it's a blend of all these different traditions. And that's part of what makes us unique.

Recently, we all saw the Olympics. And not to brag, but the United States did very well at the Olympics. [*Laughter*] Now, part of this is because we're a big country and we're a wealthy country, so we can provide training and opportunities for our athletes. But if you look at our athletes, there are two things that stand out. First of all, half—more than half of the medals we won were from women. And the reason—so we passed a law a long time ago that said, if you give sports opportunities to boys, you have to give them to girls too. It's called title IX. And as a consequence, we've developed a really excellent program for women's athletics.

The second thing is, because we have people that came from everywhere, we have people of all different types for every sport. So we have really tall people to play basketball or to swim. We have little people for gymnastics. [*Laughter*] Right? We have, genetically, for whatever sport, we have people who fit the sport, right? And that's a good metaphor for why I think we've been very successful.

Now, the challenge we have, because we are people from so many different places, is that sometimes we've had to deal with racism or conflict between races, ethnic groups, new immigrants. And that especially becomes a problem when the economy is not doing well, and so people feel stressed. And typically, when people feel stressed, they turn on others who don't look like them. It's easy—that's true everywhere in the world. When things are going good, everybody is okay. And then, when suddenly things are harder, people start saying, ah,

you know what, this is the fault of the Chinese, or this is the fault of the Jews, or this is the fault of the Houthi, or whatever this—it's the Javanese or the—so one of the things that we try to do is to make sure that we're continually reminding ourselves that what makes an American is not your race or your skin color, but what makes an American is a set of beliefs, a creed: our belief that all men are created equal or our belief that our Constitution is the law of the land and that everybody has to follow it and everybody is equal before the law, so that if you're a President or you're a janitor, in the court of law you should be treated the same. We try to promote the notion that the state cannot choose sides in a religion. We have a very religious country, but part of the reason America is very religious is because we don't let the state establish one religion, so everybody is free to choose the religion that they practice.

And so these ideas, these principles, are the things that need to be constantly strengthened and reinforced. And I think that, ultimately, that's where we need to go as a human race. And this is why sometimes we talk about issues like human rights or freedom of the press or freedom of speech. And I'll be honest, everywhere we go, including here at ASEAN, sometimes, people say: "Ah, why are the Americans talking about these issues? This is none of their business; they shouldn't be meddling in other people's business. And they're—also, America is not perfect. Look, it still has racial discrimination. It still has its own problems. It should worry about its own problems."

And I agree with that in the sense that we definitely do still have problems we have to work on. We still have discrimination; we still have situations where women are not treated equally. But I think that, over the long term, the only way that humans are going to be able to work together and interact and prosper and deal with big problems is if we are able to see what we have in common with each other and treat everybody with dignity and respect. And that means that we have to have some principles that are not just based on our nationality, they're not just based on our tribe or our religion or our ethnicity. Otherwise, we—at some point, we're not going to be able to get along, and we'll have more war, and we'll have more conflict, because that's been human history.

And this is why we talk about these issues when we travel to other countries as well. It's not because we think we're better than other people, it's because we have learned from our own experience that if you don't respect all people or you don't respect all religions, but also make sure that no matter how religious you are, you respect other people to have a different idea—we've learned that if that doesn't happen, then we have conflict.

And if you look at what's happening now in the Middle East, for example, that's not a—the problem in the Middle East is not primarily a problem of the West versus Islam; the problem increasingly is, Shia thinking that Sunnis are following the wrong path, and vice versa. And in Syria, if you're an Alawite or you're a Christian or—then you're worried about what the Sunni Muslims are going to do. And that—the same in Africa, where—a place like Rwanda, where in a matter of just a few months you saw a country kill hundreds of thousands of people just because of those differences. And that's been true in all parts of the world. So we have to fight against that. And that means that we have to be able to promote principles that rise above any individual religion, nationality, race. And that's what we've been trying to promote. We—not always successfully. Not everybody in America agrees with me on this, by the way. [*Laughter*] I'll leave it at that.

Okay. Let's see. What country has not been—okay, but it's a—first of all, it's a boy's turn, first. Huh? Myanmar. Let's go, right here.

Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative

Q. Good afternoon, Mr. President. My name is—[*inaudible*]—from Myanmar. And YSEALI is almost 3 years now. And my question is, what is the best impact of the YSEALI you have ever seen in your second term of the President, and how that is affect your administration in ASEAN? Thank you.

The President. Sorry, what is the best what?

Q. The best impacts of YSEALI.

The President. The biggest impact of YSEALI.

Q. The best impact of YSEALI——

The President. I see.

Q. ——and you have ever seen in your second term of the President, and how that affect your administration in ASEAN? Thank you.

The President. Well, I don't think I can choose the best project, because there have been so many good ones. I mean, we have already heard a few here. I know that at the last town hall that we had, YSEALI town hall—where were we? It was in Ho Chi Minh City. And I had before that, Kuala Lumpur. I'm not sure which one it was, but we—I'm going to point out, there was a Lao woman who had grown up in a small village, and she had somehow traveled—her family could not afford to give her an education. She became a migrant and traveled on her own when she was very young. And because she was so driven, somehow learned English and became part of this NGO—international NGO—and she applied for YSEALI and had become a conservationist and traveled to the United States, learned about conservation practices, and then was coming back to rural communities here in Laos to help preserve the environment and to teach sustainable agriculture.

And I remember just listening to her story—you were asking how this affected me. And I thought, if a young—and she was tiny; she was, like, about this big—[*laughter*]—and she looked very young. And I thought, if a young women, who was not—she was not born to wealth, she was not born to a famous family, she wasn't politically connected—if she could suddenly make such an impact, then that means that anybody can make an impact. And that's inspired me as a President, because it's not so much that her project was any better than any of the projects that you're working on. It's just, part of the point of YSEALI is, is that in each of us, in each of you, there's the potential to change the world. And you don't know exactly who it is here that's going to make some world-changing business or organization or environmental idea. But if we empower everybody, then we will all benefit from the talents of those people. And this is true whether you're talking about non-for-profit work or if you're talking about business.

I just came from China, from the hometown of a gentleman named Jack Ma—some of you know—he's Chinese. And he is the founder and—of Alibaba. So Jack is very wealthy now. But if you listen to Jack's story, he basically started off as somebody who couldn't get into the top universities, taught himself English because he was interested in getting to America somehow. Came back, started a business that nobody thought was going to actually be very successful. He couldn't get any funding for it. But he had this idea that the Internet and computers were really important and now has created the biggest platform in Asia for selling goods.

If you looked at Jack Ma when he was 20 years old, when he was your age, nobody would have predicted that he'd be one of the most successful businessmen on Earth. Just like if you met Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook, you wouldn't predict that he was going to be the most—have one of the most successful businesses in history.

Well, what is true in business, it's also true in politics, it's also true in government. All of you have enormous potential, but you have to have very specific plans. And you have to work really hard, and you have to pursue those plans with determination and dedication. And then, if what you're trying isn't working, then you have to try something different and not get discouraged, because very few people are successful right away. Even the most successful people, typically, they have some failures that they have to learn from and not get discouraged.

So—good. Let's see. What other countries aren't—Philippines, right here.

Sustainable Development/Alternative and Renewable Energy Sources/Environment

Q. Mabuhay, Mr. President. You were noted as one of—the only American President who was able to protect such a large area of land and sea. How were you able to justify and reconcile the very idealistic concept of economic sustainability

and development without exploiting the environment? Thank you very much.

The President. Well, it's a good question. The—and it's a good question for ASEAN, because ASEAN is so populated, there's so many people here, and it's growing so fast—it's such a young population—that you have to ask some very tough questions, particularly because what we now know is that the models of development that we saw in the West, using fossil fuels, are not going to be sustainable. We're not going to be able to develop Laos the same way that we developed the United States. We're going to have to have a new model.

Because if all of the ASEAN countries and China and India all were using as much oil and gas and coal as the West did when it was developing, we're all going to be underwater. The environment will not survive.

So what we have to do is to, first of all, leapfrog over the old models. And what I mean by that is to come up with more efficient ways of doing the same thing. A good example of that—although this is not in the energy space, but it will describe what I mean—if you travel through Asia or Africa, everybody has got a phone. But in the West, we had to lay all these lines, right, all these underground cables and above-line telephone poles. That's how we communicated. Now, if you're a poor country, it would make no sense to rebuild all those cables. Now you just put up a cell tower, because we have a new technology.

Well, what's true in communications is also true in energy. Part of what we're going to have to do is to develop solar power and wind power and hydropower. We have to come up with more efficient cars, more efficient appliances. And this is part of what the Paris Agreement was all about, was having each country come up with its own plans for reducing its carbon footprint without holding countries back from their ability to develop and insisting that the wealthier countries contribute to poorer countries so that they can develop faster, but using new technologies rather than the old ones.

But I think that every country has to recognize that there's no contradiction between conservation and development if you have a good plan. The problem is that oftentimes, in order to have good planning, you have to have a government that has skills in identifying: If we put a factory here, what's this going to do to the river? If we are going to see an expansion of population, are we going to build a mass transit system—a train system or bus system—so that people can travel without everybody using their own car? That requires a level of planning and participation and listening to the community.

I—when we were in Vietnam, one of the biggest stories there was a big factory—was it steel? I think it was a steel—there was some sort of manufacturing company that, whatever they were doing to the water, it appeared as if it was killing all the fish. I mean, you had these days where just thousands of fish were just floating up to the surface. And so there were a lot of people who were still depending on fish for their livelihoods. So that's not a good model over the long term.

So, when that factory had put in its application to build a factory, the government may have thought to itself, well, this is great for development, this is going to create jobs. But if it's creating jobs for the people in the factory, but destroying the jobs for the people who fish, then the total sum of development is lower than it could be. And if they had planned ahead of time, then they could have built a factory that maybe had a filter. It might have cost a little bit more, but it also meant that the water was maintained.

And so part of the thing for young people like you, whether you're in government or an NGO, you're going to have to learn the best practices so that you can still grow, but you do so in a way that can be sustained over a long period of time. And look, the United States is still learning how to do this, and we've been at it a long time. But we used to have terrible pollution everywhere. And we ultimately passed laws like the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act, and what we discovered was, when you set rules to preserve the environment, that companies will adjust, and they'll find new and innovative ways to make the same products and make the same amount of money, but do it

in a way that actually is good for the environment.

So the—usually, if you see the environment destroyed, it's not because that's necessary for development. It's usually because we're being lazy, and we're not being as creative as we could be about how to do it in a smarter, sustainable way.

All right? Okay. So any other countries we haven't called on yet? Vietnam? Okay. Vietnam? Vietnam? Okay, right here.

Trans-Pacific Partnership

Q. Good afternoon, President Obama. I am Pham, from Vietnam. I would like to ask you about TPP. That is a very good idea to have all other countries in the world; the TPP includes four countries in ASEAN country, like Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, and Vietnam.

The President. Right.

Q. And we expect a lot about the future with TPP. But now, so far, the Government has not ratified it. So do we believe that within the remaining time, or even the new President—the TPP will be, could be ratified? Otherwise, what shall happen? Thank you.

The President. I believe it will be ratified because it's the right thing to do. We're in a political season now, and it's always difficult to get things done. Congress isn't doing much right now. They're all going home and talking to their constituents trying to get reelected. So, after the election, I think people can refocus attention on why this is so important.

But the reason I think it is important is because the United States and the ASEAN countries and the Asia-Pacific region, together, these countries represent 40 percent of the world's economy. And the problem we are seeing is that at a time when growth is slow around the world, if we don't pass trade agreements that create a level playing field so businesses and workers are all treated fairly, so that there are environmental standards, just as we discussed, for products that are being sold—if we don't do that, then countries are going to turn inward, and everybody will be poorer.

So, right now, around the world, there are some people who are resisting trade. And in some ways, that's understandable, because in advanced countries, in wealthier countries, they feel as if the old manufacturing jobs have gone to China and places with cheaper labor and lower environmental standards and lower worker protections. And so, even though the United States is still very wealthy, there are places where the factories have closed because they've moved someplace else. And that happened over the course of the last 30 years. And people remember that, and they feel as if trade wasn't good for them.

And what I've had to explain is that, first of all, if we do nothing, then we're not going to bring those old jobs back. Those factories will not reopen. But if we now enter into agreements with countries like Vietnam, where we have difficulty selling our products, then we can create new businesses, have new customers. And yes, Vietnam may be selling shoes and shirts, but we'll be selling software, and we'll be selling jet engines, and so both countries can grow together.

One of the problems we've also seen in terms of trade is that the benefits of trade all too often have gone to the wealthy people who own the companies. A lot of times, they haven't gone to the workers. And so what I've said is that, as part of TPP, we've asked countries like Vietnam, that want to be a part of it, to start raising their standards and protections for their workers and allow worker organizations to join together so that they have more of a voice in terms of their wages and their benefits and the safety of the workplace. And in fact, the Vietnamese Government has said that it's willing to do that.

And if standards in ASEAN countries rise, then they're not going to be competing with U.S. workers just for who can pay workers the least, or put them in the most unsafe conditions. Instead, they'll be competing for who's working smartest and has the best products and the best ideas. And that's a competition that all of us will benefit from.

So I believe that we'll get it done, but it's always going to be hard. Nothing is easy in the U.S. Congress right now. [*Laughter*] Maybe there was a time when it was, but I haven't

seen it. It sure hasn't been easy since I've been President. All right? But eventually, we'll get it done.

Okay. How many more—how much time do we have? Last question? Because I can't miss—after having said such nice things about ASEAN, if I miss the dinner tonight, I'll be in trouble. [*Laughter*] So I'm going to have to go. The—who, okay, hold on, hold on. I can't hear everybody. Let's see. So I've got Brunei that hasn't had a question and Malaysia and Cambodia. Those three, huh? Man, that's a lot of countries.

All right, we'll go really quick. Somebody from Brunei. Somebody from Brunei. Okay, here. Go ahead.

First Lady Michelle Obama/Global Health

Q. Hello, Mr. President. Thank you for the opportunity. My name is—[*inaudible*]—from Brunei Darussalam. I would like to thank you for the YSEALI initiative, and also to your wife, who has initiated the healthy nutrition initiative that has changed the norms of nutrition worldwide.

The President. Yes.

Q. So my question is, what are your views on the future of global health, especially on noncommunicable diseases, such as cancer and diabetes? And will your wife continue her healthy nutrition initiative after this?

The President. Well, the—first of all, my wife I think, will continue to work on nutrition issues. But she's going to probably be more involved internationally as well as domestically than she has been. Now that our girls are getting older, she can travel more. It used to be, she didn't like going too far away for too long because she wanted to make sure the girls were doing their homework and acting properly. But now that they're almost grown—Malia is—she's leaving, and Sasha will be gone soon as well—I think you'll see Michelle work on these issues internationally more than she has.

In terms of global health, I think that there are different stages. In developing countries, there are just a lot of things that we know how to do; we just have to do them. Diseases that are the result of poor nutrition, not enough to eat, no clean drinking water; sanitation systems that are not ideal; basic preventive care that can be provided in clinics and don't require big technologies; preventing malaria, which—just mosquito nets and effective mosquito abatement can make a difference. So there's a lot of low-hanging fruit, things that we can do that can save so many lives. Maternal health, working—because we still have too much infant mortality and women who are dying in childbirth. So that's one set of issues.

A second set of issues have to do with, actually, prosperity. And that is, as people get wealthier, they're starting to get fatter, they're starting to get more diseases that are associated with modern life, right? Lack of exercise, processed foods. And what's been interesting is, these are—a lot of these problems, like diabetes, used to be primarily in wealthier countries; now you're seeing them pop up in countries like Mexico that didn't used to have these problems because of changing eating habits and lifestyles. So those are a second set of issues. Again, these are all preventable.

The third set of issues have to do with cancer and Alzheimer's, and these are issues that really have to do with new science and new technology. And one of the things that I've done as President in the United States is to invest heavily in research. Now that we have been able to crack the code on human genetics, we think that the time will come when we'll be able to diagnose diseases before they happen. We'll be able to say that this person has a tendency because of their genetic variations to get these diseases and develop cures before those diseases kill them.

But I guess my general attitude would be that even as we're working on those diseases that are worldwide and that have plagued humanity for a very long time, we can save a lot of lives and improve quality of life for a lot of people now just by dealing with the things that we know what to do, but we're just not doing it as well as we should. All right?

Okay. So, Cambodia, who—we have somebody from Cambodia? Right here, this young man. By the way, everybody looks very good in their native clothes. Those of you who are just

wearing shirts, you look good too. [*Laughter*] But I appreciate how nice everybody looks today. Go ahead.

Sustainable Development Goals

Q. Okay, so thank you, Mr. President. May name is—[*inaudible*]—from Cambodia, and actually, my question was taken by one of the Fellows, so I just come with the second question. If the 17 goals of the SDGs were implemented in the United States, what—which goals should be the top priority, and why is it? And how you are going to deal with it? Thank you.

The President. The—that's a good question. So, for those of you who didn't hear the question, SDG is the sustainable development goals that were an update on the original set of goals. Keep in mind how much progress we've made on those goals over the last 20 years.

I mean, the numbers of people who we've seen rise out of extreme poverty, the number of people who are now able to have enough to eat, the reduction in infant mortality has been remarkable. So we've made real progress. Worldwide, people are much better off now than they were just 20 years ago, and I think we can make similar progress going forward.

I've actually asked our teams to look at where in these sustainable development goals do we have work to do in the United States? And although we're still evaluating that, I would say that the areas where we still fall short are—there are still too many children in poverty in the United States. Now, they're not suffering extreme poverty of the sort that you see in parts of India or China or Laos or Cambodia, but we have children who are very poor and who still aren't getting enough to eat. That is also connected to education. And we still have a lot of children in a country so wealthy that on a day-to-day basis are not getting the kinds of educational opportunities that they deserve.

So I would say that the way forward for us involves addressing those pockets of poverty, and starting with kids. And we have enough wealth to do it. The question is whether we have the political will to make the investments in these communities, many of which are in inner cities. Oftentimes, they are poor African American or Latino who are still held back historically by discrimination. And sometimes, it's harder to get the society as a whole to invest in these kids.

But if we're going to be successful, we're going to have to do it. This goes to a question that was asked earlier. The United States, by the year 2050, so that—which is only 35 years from now, will no longer be a majority-White country—think about that—because the birth rates for particularly people of Hispanic background, but also Asians, in America is much faster, much higher.

So, if those kids today who are poor aren't provided opportunity, our society as a whole is going to be poorer, because that's going to be the workforce of the future. And that's where I think we have to make the most progress.

All right, so what was the last country?

Audience members. Malaysia!

The President. Malaysia. Okay, go ahead, right here.

Native American Issues

Q. My name is Alice Matthew, I'm from the State of Sabah in Malaysia. My question is, in solidarity with the indigenous people in—not my country, but in America itself. I just heard recently that this group of people is fighting to protect their ancestral land against the Dakota Access Pipeline. Yes. So my question is, what—in your capacity, what can you do to ensure the protection of the ancestral land, the supply of clean water, and also environmental justice is upheld? Yes.

The President. Well, it's a great question. The—as many of you know, the way that Native Americans were treated was tragic. And one of the priorities that I've had as President is restoring an honest and generous and respectful relationship with Native American tribes. And so we have made an unprecedented investment in meeting regularly with the tribes, helping them design ideas and plans for economic development, for education, for health that is culturally appropriate for them.

And this issue of ancestral lands and helping them preserve their way of life is something that we have worked very hard on. Now, some of these issues are caught up with laws and treaties, and so I can't give you details on this particular case. I'd have to go back to my staff and find out, how are we doing on this one?

But what I can tell you is, is that we have actually restored more rights among Native Americans to their ancestral lands, sacred sites, waters, hunting grounds. We have done a lot more work on that over the last 8 years than we had in the previous 20, 30 years. And this is something that I hope will continue as we go forward. But it was an excellent question.

Let me just say this in closing. This has been a great group. I want to thank, again, the university for hosting us and the people of Laos for being such wonderful partners in this process.

For all the young people here, I want to end by telling you the same thing that I tell young people back in the United States. Sometimes, because we have so much information from all around the world on our televisions, on our computers, on our phones, it seems as if the world is falling apart. All right? Because we're always getting information about, there's a war here, and there's a terrible environmental disaster there, and there's conflict here, and this horrible issue is happening, and everybody is shouting and everybody hates each other. And you get kind of depressed. You think, goodness, what's happening?

But the truth is, is that when you look at all the measures of well-being in the world, if you had a choice of when to be born and you didn't know ahead of time who you were going to be—what nationality, whether you were male or female, what religion—but you just said, when in human history would be the best time to be born? The time would be now. The world has never been healthier, it's never been wealthier, it's never been better educated. It's never been less violent, more tolerant than it is today.

Now, we don't always see that, because there are terrible things that are happening around the world, and there are real tragedies and injustice that are happening. And it's your job to fix it. But you should never be discouraged because you have more opportunity today to make a difference in the world than any generation before. And my hope is that you will seize that opportunity and you'll know that you will have a strong friend and partner in the United States of America when you do. Okay?

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:49 p.m. in the Lanon Bacam auditorium at Souphanouvong University. In his remarks, he referred to Phonesapith "Om" Sotitham, a Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) Fellow; White House Receptionist Leah Katz-Hernandez; YSEALI Institute on Global Environmental Issues alumna Chindavone Sanlath; and Mark E. Zuckerberg, founder and chief executive officer, Facebook, Inc. He also referred to his sister Maya Soetoro-Ng, brother-in-law Konrad Ng, and Mr. Ng's parents Howard and Joan Ng.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Association of Southeast Asian Nations Leaders in Vientiane, Laos

September 8, 2016

I want to begin by thanking the Government and the people of Laos for hosting this summit. I've now met with the leaders of ASEAN eight times, visited Southeast Asia more than any other U.S. President, and it reflects the growing importance of ASEAN and this region.

ASEAN is key to the U.S. rebalance to Asia, and more importantly, it's key to a peaceful and prosperous future for the world. And we have forged a strategic partnership. The U.S. is committed to building on this solid foundation.

We have laid out a common vision for the region, articulated in the Sunnylands Declara-

tion: An open, dynamic, economically competitive Asia-Pacific that respects human rights and upholds a rule-based order. Today we can discuss further how we can advance that vision together.

Through the U.S.-ASEAN Connect initiative, we're deepening our economic cooperation. As ASEAN integration generates new opportunities, the United States will work to promote innovation and entrepreneurship between our countries and throughout the region, and we will continue to push for completion of the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

With respect to maritime issues, we'll continue to work to ensure that disputes are resolved peacefully, including in the South China Sea. The landmark arbitration ruling in July, which is binding, helped to clarify maritime rights in the region. I recognize this raises tensions, but I also look forward to discussing how we can constructively move forward together to lower tensions and promote diplomacy and regional stability.

ASEAN played an important role in achieving the historic Paris climate agreement, an agreement that we must all work to bring into force as soon as possible. With ASEAN nations particularly vulnerable to climate change, we have to work together to transition to cleaner economies so as to make sure that it is not impinging on development, but rather a spur to development and opportunity for your people. And we have to strengthen resilience to the impacts of climate change.

And together, we're expanding our cooperation to address transnational threats. We will stay vigilant in combating terrorism, including in Southeast Asia, where we have very strong partnerships with many of you. We'll continue to partner to strengthen global health security and fight epidemics. We will continue to make progress on people-to-people ties, scientific exchanges, and making sure that we are increasing continually the opportunities for our businesses, our students, our scientists, our people to work together.

So, again, I want to thank very much, Mr. Prime Minister, you and the Government and the people of Laos, for your excellent hospitality. And I very much look forward to our work here together.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:15 a.m. in Room 3 of the National Convention Centre. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Thongloun Sisoulith of Laos.

The President's News Conference in Vientiane
September 8, 2016

The President. Good afternoon, everybody. Well, once again, I want to thank the Government and the people of Laos for their wonderful hospitality and for their leadership as hosts of the ASEAN and East Asia Summits. And I especially want to express my gratitude for the warmth and the kindness that they've shown to me as the first U.S. President to visit this nation. It has been a memorable and, at times, a very moving visit.

Now, we're here because, as a region with more than 600 million people, several fast-growing economies, some vibrant democracies, but also countries transitioning to democracies, and given their strategic location along vital trade routes, the 10 nations of ASEAN are critical to peace and prosperity not only in the Asia-Pacific, but to the world. Indeed, the United States and ASEAN are among each other's top trading partners. We're the largest investors in this region, and ASEAN is one of our largest markets for U.S. exports, supporting hundreds of thousands of American jobs. So our trade and investment fuels jobs and prosperity across our countries.

And that's why, as part of my rebalance of American foreign policy to the Asia-Pacific, I've deepened our engagement with the nations of Southeast Asia and with ASEAN as an institution. As the first U.S. President to meet with the leaders of all 10 ASEAN countries, I've sustained our cooperation throughout my Presidency. Earlier this year, I was proud to host the first U.S.-ASEAN summit in the

United States, at Sunnylands, California. Our meeting here in Laos was our eighth meeting. And this visit marks my ninth to the ASEAN region, more than any U.S. President.

Together, the United States and ASEAN have forged a strategic partnership guided by key principles, including that ASEAN will remain central to peace, prosperity, and progress in the Asia-Pacific. The United States is now firmly part of the East Asia Summit, and we have worked to make that organization the region's leading forum for dealing with political and security challenges, including maritime security. And we're guided by the shared vision of the region that we put forward at Sunnylands: open, dynamic, and competitive economies; mutual security and the peaceful resolution of disputes; and respect for human rights. In short, a region where all nations play by the same rules. That's a vision that we advanced here.

We're stepping up our efforts to increase trade and investment. As part of the initiative I announced earlier this year, U.S.-ASEAN Connect, we're doing more to connect our businesses and investors so that it is easier to start new ventures together; more to connect our entrepreneurs so we're encouraging innovation in what are increasingly digital economies; more to connect clean energy projects as we pursue a low-carbon future. All of which will also reinforce this region's continued economic integration through the ASEAN Community. And given that four ASEAN nations are also part of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, I reiterated that I am determined to do everything I can to encourage the U.S. Congress to approve TPP before I leave office.

With regard to security, our nations reaffirmed our commitment to a regional order where international rules and norms are upheld and where disagreements are resolved peacefully. There was recognition of the importance of the international arbitration ruling in July, which is legal and binding, and which clarified maritime claims by the Philippines and China in the South China Sea. We discussed the importance of claimants adhering to steps to which they've already agreed, including respecting international law, not militarizing disputed areas and not occupying uninhabited islands, reefs, and shoals. And I reiterated that the United States will stand with allies and partners in upholding fundamental interests, among them the freedom of navigation and overflight, lawful commerce that is not impeded, and peaceful resolution of disputes.

The United States and ASEAN also continue to deepen our cooperation on transnational challenges. We discussed the importance of continuing to share information to prevent terrorism and the flow of foreign fighters. Given the threat of climate change to all our nations—especially countries in this region—we agreed on the importance of bringing the Paris Agreement into force as soon as possible. We agreed to cooperation in the fight against human trafficking, including sharing more information on smugglers, closer law enforcement cooperation, and more support for victims.

And at the East Asia Summit, our 18 nations expressed our grave concern about North Korea's provocative missile launches, highlighted the threat posed by its nuclear and ballistic missile programs, and called on North Korea to uphold its international obligations.

And finally, I'm especially pleased that we continue to deepen the connections between the people of ASEAN and America, particularly our young people, like the inspiring young men and women that I met with at our town hall yesterday. Our Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative is now [more]* than 100,000 strong. The women's leadership academy that I announced yesterday will support women leaders in business, government, and civil society throughout ASEAN. And we're going to help increase language skills among students and teachers through our English for All program.

Now, in closing, I'm mindful that this is the last day of my last trip to this region as President. And when I think back to the time that I spent here as a boy, I can't help but be struck

* White House correction.

by the extraordinary progress that's been made across so much of the region in the decades since, even as there's still a lot of work to be done. And so it means a great deal to me, not only as President, but also personally, that over the past 8 years we've increased cooperation between ASEAN countries and the United States. It is unprecedented the breadth and depth of our relationships. And I think it's one of the most successful parts of our rebalance policy.

We've made it clear that the United States will continue to stand with the people of this region in advancing their security, prosperity, and dignity, including universal human rights. And I am very optimistic that the ties of friendship between our people, as reflected by that room full of young people that we saw yesterday, will bring us even closer in the years to come.

So, with that, I'm going to take a couple questions. And I will start with Kathleen Hennessey of AP.

The President's Travel to Asia/Guantanamo Bay Detention Center

Q. Thanks very much, Mr. President. There's been a lot of talk back at home and here about how you were received on this trip, your last to Asia. Donald Trump said you were humiliated. [*Laughter*] I suspect you think that was overblown, but——

The President. Yes.

Q. Maybe you could talk about whether or not you think your reception here was at all limited to some of the—or at all related to the limits and challenges of your Asia pivot policy. And while we're talking about legacy items, if I could just ask another quick one on Guantanamo Bay. You have 4 months left, 60 prisoners left. At this point, are you willing to acknowledge that the prison will be open by the time you leave office?

The President. Well, in terms of my reception here, as far as I can tell, it's been terrific. I don't know if you've gone and talked to some people in Laos. They seem pretty happy about my visit. Everywhere we've gone, we've had a great reception, just as earlier when we went to Vietnam we got a great reception. You'll recall, there were millions of people lining the streets.

So, if this theory about my reception and my rebalance policy is based on me going down the short stairs in China, yes, I think that is overblown. [*Laughter*] And I think that any reasonable person, certainly any person in the region, would be puzzled as to how this became somehow indicative of the work that we've done here.

If you look at the remarks of leaders, if you look at the remarks of ordinary people, if you look at the concrete work that we've gotten done on everything from economic programs to development programs, to legacy of war issues, to promoting civil society and young people, the concern that I've heard is not that what we've done hasn't been important and successful. The concern that I've heard is, will it continue? And almost uniformly, the question I get from other leaders is, we hope that America's interest and presence and engagement is sustained.

And my hope and expectation is, is that my successor will, in fact, sustain this kind of engagement, because there is a lot happening here. You've got countries here that are taking off. You've got one of the most dynamic and youngest populations in the world. This is where the action is going to be when it comes to commerce and trade and ultimately creating U.S. jobs by being able to sell to this market.

And that's the only feedback that I've received. And that's not just based on what leaders tell me. If you read local newspapers or you talk to people, that's been the same commentary that we receive generally.

With respect to Guantanamo, I am not ready to concede that it may still remain open, because we're still working diligently to continue to shrink the population. I continue to believe that Guantanamo is a recruitment tool for terrorist organizations, that it's—clouds and sours some of the counterterrorism cooperation that we need to engage in. And it's not necessary, and it's hugely expensive for U.S. taxpayers.

Is there strong resistance in Congress? Absolutely. But as we continue to shrink the

population to the point where we're looking at 40 or 50 people and are maintaining a multimillion-dollar operation to house these handfuls of individuals, I think the American people should be asking the question, why are we spending this kind of money that could be spent on other things when it's not necessary for our safety and security?

So there's no doubt that because of the politics in Congress right now, it is a tough road to hoe. But I expect to work really hard over the next 4 months—5 months—4½ months. [*Laughter*]

Margaret Brennan [CBS News].

President Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines/Philippines-U.S. Relations/Republican Presidential Nominee Donald J. Trump

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Can you tell us if last night Philippine President Duterte offered his apology to you and if you said to him the U.S. will continue to help the Philippines push back against China? And last night, sir, Donald Trump said Vladimir Putin has been more of a leader than you, and then he said you have reduced American generals to rubble. Do you care to defend your legacy?

The President. [*Laughter*] Do I care to defend—okay.

Q. ——respond.

The President. Okay, okay—respond. Got it. I did shake hands with President Duterte last night. It was not a long interaction. And what I indicated to him is, is that my team should be meeting with his and determine how we can move forward on a whole range of issues.

As I said when I was asked about this in China, I don't take these comments personally, because it seems as if this is a phrase he's used repeatedly, including directed at the Pope and others, and so I think it seems to be just a habit, a way of speaking for him.

But as I said in China, we want to partner with the Philippines on the particular issue of narcotraffickers, which is a serious problem in the Philippines. It's a serious problem in the United States and around the world. On that narrow issue, we do want to make sure that the partnership we have is consistent with international norms and rule of law. So we're not going to back off our position that if we're working with a country—whether it's on antiterrorism, whether it's on going after drug traffickers—as despicable as these networks may be, as much damage as they do, it is important from our perspective to make sure that we do it the right way, because the consequences of when you do it the wrong way is, innocent people get hurt and you have a whole bunch of unintended consequences that don't solve the problem.

It has no impact on our broader relationship with the Philippine people, on the wide range of programs and security cooperation that we have with this treaty ally. And it certainly has no impact in terms of how we interpret our obligations to continue to build on the longstanding alliance that we have with the Philippines however that may play itself out. And my hope and expectation is, is that as President Duterte and his team get acclimated to his new position, that they're able to define and clarify what exactly they want to get done, how that fits in with the work that we're already doing with the Philippine Government, and hopefully, it will be on a strong footing by the time the next administration comes in.

As far as Mr. Trump, I've—I think I've already offered my opinion. I don't think the guy is qualified to be President of the United States. And every time he speaks, that opinion is confirmed. And I think the most important thing for the public and the press is to just listen to what he says and follow up and ask questions about what appear to be either contradictory or uninformed or outright wacky ideas.

There is this process that seems to take place over the course of the election season where somehow behavior that in normal times we would consider completely unacceptable and outrageous becomes normalized and people start thinking that we should be grading on a curve. But I can tell you from the interactions that I've had over the last 8 or 9 days with foreign leaders that this is serious business, and you actually have to know what you're talking about, and you actually have to have done your homework. And when you speak, it should actually reflect thought-out policy that you can

implement. And I have confidence that if in fact people just listen to what he has to say and look at his track record—or lack thereof—that they'll make a good decision.

Elise Hu [NPR].

China-U.S. Relations/North Korea

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President. On North Korea, there's increasing evidence that China isn't enforcing economic sanctions, namely, when it comes to coal. So what's the next move there in your remaining 4½ months in office? And second, is it time for a fundamental rethink of North Korea policy, given that all these years of condemnations and increasing sanctions haven't led to a desired outcome? Thank you.

The President. Good. Well, those are good questions. In my meeting with President Xi, we emphasized the importance of full implementation of the U.N. sanctions that have been put forward. I can tell you that based on not only their presentations, but actually intelligence and evidence that we've seen, China has done more on sanctions implementation than they have on some of the previous U.N. Security Council sanctions. But you are absolutely right that there are still places where they need to tighten up. And we continue to indicate to them the importance of tightening those up.

You may have noted that China continues to object to the THAAD deployment in the Republic of Korea, one of our treaty allies. And what I've said to President Xi directly is that we cannot have a situation where we're unable to defend either ourselves or our treaty allies against increasingly provocative behavior and escalating capabilities by the North Koreans. And I indicated to him that if the THAAD bothered him, particularly since it has no purpose other than defensive and does not change the strategic balance between the United States and China, that they need to work with us more effectively to change Pyongyang's behavior.

Now, when it comes to changing Pyongyang's behavior, it's tough. It is true that our approach—my approach since I've been President—is to not reward bad behavior. And that was based on the fact that, before I came into office, you had a pattern in which North Korea would engage in some provocative action and, as a consequence of the equivalent of throwing a tantrum, countries would then try to placate them by giving them humanitarian aid or providing other concessions or engaging in dialogue, which would relieve some of the pressure, and then they would just go right back to the same provocative behavior later.

And so our view was, that wasn't working, let's try something else. Now, it is entirely fair to say that they have continued to engage in the development of their nuclear program and these ballistic missile tests. And so we are constantly examining other strategies that we can take, close consultations with Republic of Korea and Japan, as well as China and Russia and others who are interested parties, and we do believe that if there are any signs, at any point, that North Korea is serious about dialogue around denuclearization in the Korean Peninsula, that we'll be ready to have those conversations.

It's not as if we are looking for a problem or avoiding a willingness to engage diplomatically. But diplomacy requires that Pyongyang meet its international obligations, and not only is it failing to meet those international obligations, it's not even suggesting that they have any intention to do so anytime in the future regardless of the inducements that might be put on the table.

So look, we are deeply disturbed by what's happened. We are going to make sure that we put our defensive measures in place so that America is protected, our allies are protected. We will continue to put some of the toughest pressure that North Korea has ever been under as a consequence of this behavior. Can I guarantee that it works? No. But it is the best options that we have available to us right now. And we will continue to explore with all parties involved, including China, other potential means by which we can bring about a change in behavior.

Bob Woodruff [ABC News].

Vietnam War/Cold War/Heroism of U.S. Servicemembers

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. First of all, I just want to let you know that this is going to be more of a personal question for you. We are almost the same exact age, born August 1961, but I'm 2 weeks younger than you. [*Laughter*]

The President. You know, I noticed that when we were in the gym together, you were working out a little harder than me. [*Laughter*]

Q. We only have so many years left. [*Laughter*]

The President. So those 2 weeks clearly are making a difference.

Q. [*Laughter*] But I want to ask you about some of your thoughts all those years ago, since we were living in those days of the Vietnam era. What were your thoughts about Vietnam, the war at that time and certainly as time when on, but more importantly, about the secret war, when you found out about that and also as time went by? Given what you learned about that and what you see now and what you've witnessed when you're here, do you think you should apologize fully to the country of Laos? And one other very important thing too is, for those American veterans who did serve in the secret war, those that are special ops, CIA, certainly pilots that dropped the bombs—those are the ones that targeted known enemies in a war they did not create. Would you be comfortable, in Laos, calling them heroes as we do with those that served in Iraq and Afghanistan?

The President. Well, because we're the same age, you'll recall that, sort of, at the peak of the war, we were still too young, I think, to fully understand the scope of what was taking place. It was the tail end of the war where we're entering high school and starting to understand the meaning of it. But at that point, it was—I think the debate had raged. Even those who had been strong supporters of the war recognized there needed to be some mechanism to bring it to an end. So I can't say that I was so precocious that I had deep thoughts about it at the time, other than the images that we all saw on television.

Standing here now, in retrospect, I think what I can say is that the United States was on the right side of history when it came to the cold war. There may have been moments, particularly here in Southeast Asia, in which, in our singular focus on defeating an expansionist and very aggressive communism that we didn't think through all the implications of what we did as policymakers. And certainly, when you see the dropping of cluster bombs, trying to figure out how that was going to be effective—particularly, since part of the job was to win over hearts and minds—how that was going to work, I think, with the benefit of hindsight, we have to say that a lot of those consequences were not ones that necessarily served our interests.

Having said that—and I've said this before—regardless of what happens in the White House and decisions made by policymakers, when our men and women in uniform go into action and put their lives on the line and are carrying out their duty, my attitude is, they're always heroes, because they are saying that I am willing to do whatever it takes, what my Commander in Chief has ordered, in order to keep the American people safe. And by definition, their job is to put their lives on the line and make sacrifices, both seen and unseen, that have longstanding ramifications. And that act of sacrifice is heroic.

And one of the things that when I think about in terms of legacy and I think, reflect back on my Presidency as it comes to an end, is the degree to which I came in respecting and honoring our men and women in uniform, I leave here even more in awe of what they do.

And it also is one of the reasons why I take so seriously the decisions I make about war and peace. Because I know whatever decision I make, there are men and women out there who will carry out my decision, even if they think it's wrong, even if they didn't vote for me, even if they have completely different ideas about what's required for our national security. That's heroism. That's service. That's the definition of it. And that puts a special burden on the occupant of my office to get it right or at least as right as you can. And hopefully,

when people look back 20 years from now or 30 years from now at the decisions I made, they'll be able to say that he did pretty good.

All right? Thank you very much, everybody. Let's go home.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 4:23 p.m. in the Ballroom at the Landmark Mekong Riverside Hotel. In his remarks, the President referred to Pope Francis. He also referred to the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) antiballistic missile system. A reporter referred to President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia.

Statement on North Korea's Nuclear Test
September 9, 2016

The United States condemns North Korea's September 9 nuclear test in the strongest possible terms as a grave threat to regional security and to international peace and stability. North Korea stands out as the only country to have tested nuclear weapons this century. Today's test, North Korea's second this year, follows an unprecedented campaign of ballistic missile launches, which North Korea claims are intended to serve as delivery vehicles for nuclear weapons targeting the United States and our allies, the Republic of Korea and Japan. As Commander in Chief, I have a responsibility to safeguard the American people and ensure that the United States is leading the international community in responding to this threat and North Korea's other provocations with commensurate resolve and condemnation.

To be clear, the United States does not, and never will, accept North Korea as a nuclear state. Far from achieving its stated national security and economic development goals, North Korea's provocative and destabilizing actions have instead served to isolate and impoverish its people through its relentless pursuit of nuclear weapons and ballistic missile capabilities. Today's nuclear test, a flagrant violation of multiple U.N. Security Council resolutions, makes clear North Korea's disregard for international norms and standards for behavior and demonstrates it has no interest in being a responsible member of the international community.

Last night I returned from the G–20 and East Asia Summit meetings in Asia, where my counterparts and I were united in our call for North Korea to return to the path of denuclearization. Upon hearing the news of the test, I had the opportunity to consult separately via phone with Republic of Korea (R.O.K.) President Park Geun-hye and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. We agreed to work with the U.N. Security Council, our other six-party partners, and the international community to vigorously implement existing measures imposed in previous resolutions and to take additional significant steps, including new sanctions, to demonstrate to North Korea that there are consequences to its unlawful and dangerous actions. I restated to President Park and Prime Minister Abe the unshakable U.S. commitment to take necessary steps to defend our allies in the region, including through our deployment of a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) battery to the R.O.K. and the commitment to provide extended deterrence, guaranteed by the full spectrum of U.S. defense capabilities.

The President's Weekly Address
September 10, 2016

Fifteen years ago, a September day that began like any other became one of the darkest in our Nation's history. The Twin Towers were reduced to rubble. The Pentagon was in

flames. A Pennsylvania field burned with the wreckage of an airplane. And nearly 3,000 innocent lives were lost: sons and daughters, husbands and wives, neighbors and colleagues and friends. They were from all walks of life, all races and religions, all colors and creeds, from across America and around the world.

This weekend, we honor their memory once more. We stand with the survivors who still bear the scars of that day. We thank the first responders who risked everything to save others. And we salute a generation of Americans—our men and women in uniform, diplomats, and our intelligence, homeland security, and law enforcement professionals—who serve, and in some cases have given their lives, to help keep us safe.

A lot has changed over these past 15 years. We've delivered devastating blows to the Al Qaida leaders that attacked us on 9/11. We delivered justice to Usama bin Laden. We've strengthened our homeland security. We've prevented attacks. We've saved lives.

At the same time, the terrorist threat has evolved, as we've seen so tragically from Boston to Chattanooga, from San Bernardino to Orlando. So, in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and beyond, we'll stay relentless against terrorists like Al Qaida and ISIL. We will destroy them. And we'll keep doing everything in our power to protect our homeland.

As we reflect on these past 15 years, it's also important to remember what has not changed: the core values that define us as Americans, the resilience that sustains us. After all, terrorists will never be able to defeat the United States. Their only hope is to terrorize us into changing who we are or our way of life. That's why we Americans will never give in to fear. It's why this weekend we remember the true spirit of 9/11. We're still the America of heroes who ran into harm's way, of ordinary folks who took down the hijackers, of families who turned their pain into hope. We are still the America that looks out for one another, bound by our shared belief that I am my brother's keeper, I am my sister's keeper.

In the face of terrorism, how we respond matters. We cannot give in to those who would divide us. We can't react in ways that erode the fabric of our society. Because it's our diversity, our welcoming of all talents, our treating of everybody fairly—no matter their race, gender, ethnicity, or faith—that's part of what makes our country great. It's what makes us resilient. And if we stay true to those values, we'll uphold the legacy of those we've lost, and keep our Nation strong and free.

God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 11:10 a.m. on August 26 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on September 10. In the address, the President referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 9, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on September 10. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at a Wreath-Laying Ceremony Commemorating the 15th Anniversary of the September 11 Terrorist Attacks at the Pentagon Memorial in Arlington, Virginia

September 11, 2016

Audience member. We love you! [*Laughter*]

The President. Well, I love you back.

Good morning.

Audience members. Good morning!

The President. Scripture tells us, "Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; . . . write them on the tablet of your heart."

Secretary Carter, Chairman Dunford, outstanding members of our Armed Forces, and most of all, survivors of that September day and the families of those we lost: It is a great honor once again to be with you on this day, a day that I know is still difficult, but which reveals the love and faithfulness

in your hearts and in the heart of our Nation.

We remember, and we will never forget, the nearly 3,000 beautiful lives taken from us so cruelly, including 184 men, women, and children here, the youngest just 3 years old. We honor the courage of those who put themselves in harm's way to save people they never knew. We come together in prayer and in gratitude for the strength that has fortified us across these 15 years. And we renew the love and the faith that binds us together as one American family.

Fifteen years may seem like a long time, but for the families who lost a piece of their heart that day, I imagine it can seem like just yesterday. Perhaps it's the memory of a last kiss given to a spouse or the last goodbye to a mother or father, a sister or a brother. We wonder how their lives might have unfolded, how their dreams might have taken shape. And I am mindful that no words we offer or deeds we do can ever truly erase the pain of their absence.

And yet you—the survivors and families of 9/11—your steadfast love and faithfulness has been an inspiration to me and to our entire country. Even as you've mourned, you've summoned the strength to carry on. In the names of those you've lost, you've started scholarships and volunteered in your communities and done your best to be a good neighbor and a good friend and a good citizen. And in your grief and grace, you have reminded us that together, there's nothing we Americans cannot overcome.

The question before us, as always, is, how do we preserve the legacy of those we lost? How do we live up to their example? And how do we keep their spirit alive in our own hearts?

Well, we have seen the answer in a generation of Americans—our men and women in uniform, diplomats, intelligence, homeland security, and law enforcement professionals—all who have stepped forward to serve and who have risked and given their lives to help keep us safe. Thanks to their extraordinary service, we've dealt devastating blows to Al Qaida. We've delivered justice to Usama bin Laden. We've strengthened our homeland security. We've prevented attacks. We've saved lives. We resolve to continue doing everything in our power to protect this country that we love. And today we once again pay tribute to these patriots, both military and civilian, who serve in our name, including those far away from home in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Perhaps most of all, we stay true to the spirit of this day by defending not only our country, but also our ideals. Fifteen years into this fight, the threat has evolved. With our stronger defenses, terrorists often attempt attacks on a smaller, but still deadly, scale. Hateful ideologies urge people in their own country to commit unspeakable violence. We've mourned the loss of innocents from Boston to San Bernardino to Orlando.

Groups like Al Qaida, like ISIL, know that we will never be able—they will never be able to defeat a nation as great and as strong as America. So, instead, they've tried to terrorize in the hopes that they can stoke enough fear that we turn on each other and that we change who we are or how we live. And that's why it is so important today that we reaffirm our character as a nation, a people drawn from every corner of the world, every color, every religion, every background, bound by a creed as old as our founding: *e pluribus unum*. Out of many, we are one. For we know that our diversity, our patchwork heritage, is not a weakness; it is still, and always will be, one of our greatest strengths. This is the America that was attacked that September morning. This is the America that we must remain true to.

Across our country today, Americans are coming together in service and remembrance. We run our fingers over the names in memorial benches here at the Pentagon. We walk the hallowed grounds of a Pennsylvania field. We look up at a gleaming tower that pierces the New York City skyline. But in the end, the most enduring memorial to those we lost is ensuring the America that we continue to be: that we stay true to ourselves; that we stay true to what's best in us; that we do not let others divide us.

As I mark this solemn day with you for the last time as President, I think of Americans

whose stories I've been humbled to know these past 8 years, Americans who I believe embody the true spirit of 9/11.

It's the courage of Welles Crowther, just 24 years old, in the South Tower, the man in the red bandana who spent his final moments helping strangers to safety before the towers fell. It's the resilience of the firehouse on Eighth Avenue, patriots who lost more than a dozen men, but who still suit up every day as the "Pride of Midtown." It's the love of a daughter, Payton Wall of New Jersey, whose father, in his last moments on the phone from the towers, told her, "I will always be watching over you."

It's the resolve of those Navy SEALs who made sure justice was finally done, who served as we must live as a nation: getting each other's backs, looking out for each other, united, one mission, one team. It's the ultimate sacrifice of men and women who rest for eternity not far from here in gentle green hills, in perfect formation; Americans who gave their lives in faraway places so that we can be here today, strong and free and proud. It's all of us, every American who gets up each day, lives our lives, carries on, because as Americans, we do not give in to fear. We will preserve our freedoms and the way of life that makes us a beacon to the world.

Let us not—"let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; . . . write them on the tablet of your heart." In how we conduct ourselves as individuals and as a nation, we have the opportunity each and every day to live up to the sacrifice of those heroes that we lost. May God bless the memory of the loved ones here and across the country. They remain in our hearts today. May He watch over these faithful families and all who protect us. And may God forever bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:43 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., USMC; and Dana Falkenberg of University Park, MD, who was killed aboard American Airlines Flight 77, which crashed into the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Congressional Leaders
September 12, 2016

Well, I want to thank the four leaders for coming down. Even though I know that we're in the midst of political season and everybody is thinking about elections, there is still business to be done.

And I was encouraged by some of the constructive work that's being done right now: number one, to make sure that the Government stays open; number two, to make sure that we're able to adequately fund our efforts to not only deal with the Zika outbreaks, but also to come up with diagnostic tools and vaccines that will solve the problem for good.

We also had an opportunity to discuss the possibilities of disaster relief. As all of you know, I visited Louisiana, where obviously a lot of folks are still suffering the cleanup process there. And there are also significant other areas of the country that are suffering from everything from wildfires to the situation in Flint, which is still unresolved. So we discussed strategies where we might be able to make a difference there.

We had an opportunity to talk about some initiatives that had been moving forward in a bipartisan basis that have not yet been fully resolved, but where we still have a chance to make a difference, like criminal justice reform. And we—I also gave everybody here a briefing on my travels through Asia and some of the strategic issues that are posed there.

So my hope is, is that we can make some modest progress in areas where we agree and we've been working together. After the elec-

tion, I am even more hopeful that we can get some things done. But I want to thank everybody for coming here, and my hope is that by the time Congress adjourns before the election that we will have an agreement in place to fund the Government and that our Zika funding will be taken care of.

So thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:05 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Senate Majority Leader A. Mitchell McConnell; Senate Minority Leader Harry M. Reid; Speaker of the House of Representatives Paul D. Ryan; and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi.

Statement on the Observance of Eid al-Adha
September 12, 2016

Michelle and I extend our warmest wishes to Muslims across our country and around the world who are celebrating Eid al-Adha. This special holiday is a time to honor the sacrifice, resolve, and commitment to God demonstrated by Abraham. It marks the end of the pilgrimage of Hajj performed each year by millions of Muslims who journey from all corners of the world to Mecca as a testament to their faith. It is also a celebration of the ways faith can transcend any differences or boundaries and unite us under the banners of fellowship and love.

During this time, Muslims from all walks of life join their neighbors and friends at their local mosques, community centers, and homes to pray, give alms, exchange gifts, and recommit to helping others. Food and money are distributed to those in need as men, women, and children reflect on their fortune and look towards the next year.

As we mark Eid al-Adha this year, we are reminded of the millions of refugees around the globe who are spending this sacred holiday separated from their families, unsure of their future, but still hoping for a brighter tomorrow. And as a nation, we remain committed to welcoming the stranger with empathy and an open heart, from the refugee who flees war-torn lands to the immigrant who leaves home in search of a better life.

May the spirits of community togetherness, principled service, and compassionate generosity bring good tidings to those celebrating Eid al-Adha. From our family to yours, *Eid Mubarak*.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
September 13, 2016

The President. Hello, Philly! Hello, Philadelphia! Oh, it is good to be back in Philly. Can everybody please give Patrick a big round of applause for that great introduction? Oh, it is good to be back on the campaign trail. Now, I understand I am not—I know I'm not the first person from the White House to come to Philly this week. Some of you may have seen Joe Biden at the Eagles game. He told me, "Barack, you've got to get on the Wentz wagon." He said, "We—they—we've got a new quarterback; we've got hope in Philly." And I had to explain, "Joe, I am a Bears fan."

Audience members. Boo!

The President. And we play Philly next Monday night. So I've got to stick with my team, but I am going to go to Philly and scout out what all the fuss is about.

I also am here because you've got some of the best public servants in America. They work their heart out every day for you. You've got Scranton's favorite son, in addition to Joe Biden: Senator Bob Casey, one of the best Senators in the country. Your outstanding Governor, Tom Wolf, is here. Your wonderful mayor, Jim Kenney, is here. One of your outstanding

Members of the House of Representatives, Bob Brady, is in the house. Your candidate for the United States Senate—this is a special woman, she is going to do a great job—Katie McGinty is here. And your candidate for attorney general, an old friend of mine, somebody who was with me early, early, early on: Josh Shapiro. Give Josh a big round of applause. Now——

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you too. But I've got to—but we've got some business to do here, so—we've got some business to do.

Audience member. I love you, Obama!

The President. This will be—this is going to be one of the last times I visit Philly as President.

And so my first order of business is to say thank you for all the support you've given me all these years. And I've got incredible memories here in Philly, most recently at the Democratic National Convention. And I could not be prouder of the leader that we have nominated to take my place. So, even though I've run my last campaign, I am going to work as hard as I can this fall to elect Hillary Clinton as our next President of the United States of America.

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. Hillary!

Now, in election season, you will often hear crazy stuff. But I've got to say, this year we've been hearing a little more crazy than usual. [*Laughter*] Having said that, after almost two terms as your President, I am here to tell you I am more optimistic about our future than I have ever been. Look, because I've seen an America that, for all the challenges, for all the noise of the politics, still has the capacity to come together and do great things.

You think about it. We fought our way back from the worst recession in 80 years. We turned around a declining economy. We helped our auto industry set new records. Our businesses created 15 million new jobs. Slashed our dependence on foreign oil. Doubled our production of clean energy. Made marriage equality a reality in all 50 States.

We brought more of our troops home to their families. We delivered justice to Usama bin Laden. Through diplomacy rather than war, we shut down Iran's nuclear program, opened up a new chapter with the people of Cuba, brought nearly 200 nations together around a climate agreement that could save this planet for our kids and our grandkids. That's what we've done.

By so many measures, America is stronger and more prosperous than when we started out on this journey together. In fact, some of you may have saw, there was a new report out just today showing that last year, across every age, every race in America, incomes rose and the poverty rate fell. In fact, the typical household income of Americans rose by $2,800, which is the single biggest 1-year increase on record. We lifted 3.5 million people out of poverty. That's the largest 1-year drop in poverty since 1968. The uninsured rate is the lowest it has been since they kept records. The pay gap between men and women shrank to the lowest level ever.

So, now, let's face it, Republicans don't like to hear good news right now. [*Laughter*] But it's important just to understand this is a big deal. More Americans are working; more have health insurance. Incomes are rising. Poverty is falling.

Audience member. And gas is $2 a gallon!

The President. And gas is $2 a gallon. I didn't even—thank you for reminding me. [*Laughter*] Thanks, Obama. [*Laughter*] Yes. So the steps that we have been taking over these years, they're paying off. We've shown that progress is possible.

And of course, none of this was easy. We knew all along that change wasn't going to be quick. We knew that we wouldn't meet all of our challenges in one term or even in one Presidency. But we're here today because we know we've got more work to do for every worker who still needs a good job, for every worker who still needs a raise or a decent retirement, for every child who still needs a world-class education as a ladder out of poverty, for every family who hasn't yet felt progress these past 8 years. We've got more work to do, we know that.

And the choice that you make—that we make—just 8 weeks from today will determine

the direction of this country for a long time. And I've already said this: This is not a choice—this is not the usual choice between parties and policies and left and right. This is more fundamental. This is a fundamental choice about who we are as a people. This is a choice about the very meaning of America.

Democrats and Republicans, we've always had our differences. There's nothing wrong with that; that's how the country moves forward. Right? We have debates; different ideas compete. We see what's going to make us work. But what we've seen from the other side in this election, this isn't Abraham Lincoln's Republican Party. This isn't even the vision of freedom that Ronald Reagan talked about.

This is a dark, pessimistic vision of a country where we turn against each other, we turn away from the rest of the world. They're not offering serious solutions. They're just fanning resentment and blame and anger and hate.

And that is not the America we know. That's not the America I know. The America I know is full of courage and optimism and generosity and ingenuity and innovation. Yes, we've got real concerns. We worry about paying the bills; we worry about protecting our kids; we worry about caring for a sick parent. Lord knows we get frustrated about Washington and all the gridlock. We worry about racial division. There are pockets of America that never fully recovered from the factories closing down. There are parents who are worrying about whether their kids are going to have the same opportunities they had.

But I—look, I've traveled in every State. And I've seen, more than anything, all that is good and right about America. I see people working hard. I see folks starting businesses. I see teachers just digging in their own pockets to buy school materials and teaching kids, just because they love kids. I see men and women in uniform serving their country, making incredible sacrifices. I see engineers inventing new stuff and doctors coming up with new cures.

And most of all, I see this younger generation that is so full of energy and ideas and aren't going to be held back by the old ideas, imagine what can be instead of just what is. And I see Americans of every party and every background and every faith who ultimately believe we're stronger together. All of us: young, old; men, women; Black, White, Latino, Asian, Native American, folks with disabilities, all pledging allegiance to the same, proud flag.

That is the America I know. That's the America you know and believe in. And there is just one candidate in this race who's devoted her life to building that America: a mother and a grandmother who would do anything to help our children do better; a leader who's got real plans to break down barriers and blast through glass ceilings and widen opportunity for every single American, the next President of the United States of America, Hillary Clinton.

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. Hillary!

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. Now, look, can I just say, I am really into electing Hillary Clinton. Like, I—this is not me going through the motions here. I really, really, really want to elect Hillary Clinton. And sometimes, folks, they're kind of surprised by that because they remember, man, you guys had a tough fight 8 years ago.

And it was tough, because Hillary is tough. Every time I thought I had that race won, I was, like, going up the "Rocky Steps." [*Laughter*] I was like—I was about to celebrate, and then I look, and she's right there. And I got whooped here in Pennsylvania. She whooped me. [*Laughter*] Now, you did make it up to me in November, when I won. [*Laughter*]

But I had seen what she could accomplish. I had seen how smart and savvy and tough she was. So I asked her, I said, join my team. And she wasn't sure about it at first. But she ultimately knew that what was at stake was bigger than either of us. That's the kind of patriot she is.

And so, for 4 years, I had a front-row seat. I watched her intelligence. I watched her judgment. I watched her discipline. I saw her in the Situation Room, where she argued in favor of the mission for bin Laden. I watched her pursue diplomacy to open up new partnerships, to help promote democracy, to help reduce the nuclear threat. And she worked hard, tirelessly,

flying around the world again and again. I don't know how many times she lapped it—the world, but she went around a long time. [*Laughter*] Because she had never forgotten what she was fighting for: to make sure every child has the same opportunities as her granddaughter and her daughter's and your kids.

And if there's one thing I can tell you, Philadelphia, nobody fully understands the demands of my job—this job of the President—until you actually sit behind that desk. Folks, look, I didn't understand it before I had the job. You think you do——

Audience members. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

The President. No, no, no, hold on, I appreciate that. But I'm not gone yet, so don't—save the thank-yous. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. You ain't done yet!

The President. I'm not finished yet. I've got a few more months.

Listen, the—what you come to realize when you're in this job is, anybody can pop off, anybody can fire off a tweet. Everybody is a critic. But that doesn't mean you know what it's like to manage a global crisis. You don't know what it's like to send a group of young people to war, knowing some won't come back. But the closest you can come to understanding what it's like is to be where Hillary has been, to have been part of those decisions. She knows what it means for working families and senior citizens and small-businessowners and soldiers and veterans when we make policy in the White House. And in the middle of crises, she'll listen to people, and she will keep her cool, and she treats everybody with respect. And no matter how daunting the odds, no matter how many times people knock her down and mess with her, she does not quit. She doesn't quit. She doesn't quit. That's the Hillary that I know.

And that's why I really want to get her elected. That's the Hillary I've come to admire. I believe there has never been a man or a woman more qualified than Hillary Clinton to serve as our President.

Now, Hillary actually has plans to address the things that she's heard from you on the campaign trail: specific ideas to invest in new jobs and to help workers share in their company's profits and to help put kids in preschool so they get a good start and to put students through college without taking on a mountain of debt. And I know that these days in campaigns, sometimes, the plans get ignored. But they're there, and they make sense, and they add up.

And then there's the other guy—[*laughter*]—Donald Trump.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo, vote! Don't boo, vote! Booing is easy. I need you to vote.

Look, let's talk about Mr. Trump. He's not really a plans guy, a fact guy. He calls himself a business guy. But America has got a lot of business men and women who have succeeded without hiding their tax returns or leaving a trail of lawsuits or workers who didn't get paid, people feeling like they got cheated.

I mean, look, I keep on reading this analysis that, well, you know, Trump has got support from, like, working folks. Really? That—like, this is the guy you want to be championing working people? This guy who spent 70 years on this Earth showing no concern for working people, this guy is suddenly going to be your champion?

Audience members. No!

The President. I mean, he spent most of his life trying to stay as far away from working people as he could. And now this guy is going to be the champion of working people? Huh? I mean, he wasn't going to let you on his golf course. [*Laughter*] He wasn't going to let you by in his condo. And now suddenly, this guy is going to be your champion?

And so, yes, if you oppose raising the minimum wage, you should vote for Trump. You should also vote for Pat Toomey. You've got—a Trump-Toomey economy will be right up your alley.

But if you are actually concerned about paying your bills, growing the economy, creating opportunity for everybody, keeping the trend of rising incomes going and rising wages going and uninsured going down and poverty going down—if that's what you're looking for, this shouldn't even be close. If you want higher

wages, better benefits, a fairer Tax Code, a bigger voice for workers, stronger regulations on Wall Street, then you should be voting for Hillary Clinton and Katie McGinty and Bob Brady to stand up for you.

And if you're concerned about who's going to keep your family safe in this dangerous world, then the choice is even clearer. Look, I just came from overseas. Talk to the other leaders around the world. They don't even understand how this is close. Hillary has worked with our intelligence teams and our diplomats and our military. She's got the judgment and the temperament and the experience to meet any threat. There's no scenario that she will not have seen before. And she will see to it that our troops finish the job of defeating ISIL: doing it the right way, without resorting to torture, without banning entire religions from our country. She's prepared to be the next Commander in Chief.

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. And then you've got the Donald—[*laughter*]—who just last week went on Russian state television to talk down our military and to curry favor with Vladimir Putin.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. He loves this guy. Loves this guy. Think about what's happened to the Republican Party. [*Laughter*] Right? They used to be opposed to Russia and authoritarianism, and fighting for freedom and fighting for democracy. And now their nominee is out there praising a guy, saying he's a strong leader because he invades smaller countries, jails his opponents, controls the press, and drives his economy into a long recession.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. No, I—look, I'm actually being serious about it. Think about this. And then, when—and when the interviewer asked him, well, why are—why do you support this guy, he said: "He's a strong guy. Look, he's got a 82-percent poll rating." [*Laughter*] Well, yes, so did—Saddam Hussein had a 90-percent poll rating. [*Laughter*] I mean, if you control the media and you've taken away everybody's civil liberties and you jail dissidents, that's what happens. If the pollster calls you up and says, do you support the guy who, if you don't support him, he might throw you in jail, you say, yes, I love that guy. [*Laughter*]

But think about the fact that that is Donald Trump's role model. I mean, I have to do business with Putin. I have to do business with Russia. That's part of foreign policy. But I don't go around saying that's my role model. [*Laughter*] Can you imagine Ronald Reagan idolizing somebody like that?

Audience members. No!

The President. He saw America as "a shining city on a hill." Donald Trump calls it "a divided crime scene." [*Laughter*] He's not offering any real policies or plans, just offering division and offering fear. And he's betting that if he scares enough people, he might just scare up enough votes to win this election.

Audience member. No way!

Audience members. Boo!

Audience member. Never Trump!

Audience members. Dump Trump! Dump Trump! Dump Trump!

The President. I mean, look, I believe Americans are not a fearful people. We don't look for being ruled. Our power comes from those ideals first put into place right here in Philadelphia: that all of us are created equal; that "We, the people" can "form a more perfect Union." We believe in democracy. That's what we believe in.

And we don't believe that one person is going to do it for us. It's what we can do together, achieved by us. And yes, it's hard and slow and sometimes frustrating to persuade people and work with people and form coalitions, but that's the necessary work of self-government.

And that's what Hillary Clinton understands because she's been through it. She knows that in a democracy, in a big, diverse country like this one, it doesn't work if we just demonize each other and call each other names. She knows that love trumps hate. She knows that most issues aren't just black and white and that you've got to compromise to get things done, even when you're a hundred-percent right. And she knows that for progress to happen, we have to listen to each other, and we have to see ourselves in each other, and we've got to fight

for our principles, but also fight to find common ground.

And these days, our politics doesn't always lend itself to those ideals. We get impatient. We want our progress right away. And we don't want to have to compromise, and we don't have to listen to other folks. But I promise you, when we stay at it, progress does happen.

And if you don't believe it, ask the 20 million people who have got health care today who didn't have it. Ask that marine who serves his country without hiding the husband that he loves. Democracy works. But here's the thing, here——

Audience member. We need some help!

The President. We've got somebody who fainted. This is what happens. They'll be okay. Just give them a little room. Everybody bend their knees one time. [*Laughter*] Just don't lock your knees. Keep on bending them a little bit. We'll do a little exercise right now. EMS folks, they're right in front. If you can find somebody. Drink some water.

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you too. But bend your knees. [*Laughter*]

But listen, listen to this. You've got to want it. You've got to want democracy, not just on election day, but all the days in between. And this is where you come in. We can close the inequality gap in our economy. Hillary has got plans to make sure everybody has a shot, not just those at the top. But you've got to help her by voting for Democrats up and down the ticket. We've got to get a Congress back, and we've got to hold everybody we elect accountable for getting the job done.

We can reform our criminal justice system. But you've got to vote: not just for President, but for mayors and sheriffs and States' attorneys and State legislators. We've got to work with police and protesters until laws and practices are changed.

We can fix our broken immigration system, but we can't keep on sending Republicans to Congress who stand in the way. We've got to vote for leaders who see immigrants not as criminals or rapists, but who—as families who came here the same reason ours did: to work and to study and to contribute. We need leaders in Congress who know the American Dream is not something that a wall can contain.

We can keep making progress against climate change. This month was the hottest on record. This year is going to end up being the hottest on record. This is not somebody's imagination. This is not some liberal plot. It's a problem. But we've got to vote for people who actually understand that it's real. And we've got to engage not just young people on college campuses, but also single moms who are worried about gas prices and coal miners who are worried about providing for their kids. And Hillary has got real plans to do that.

And if you don't think the stakes are high enough, just remember that for months now, the Republicans in the Senate have refused to do their job and fill a vacancy for the Supreme Court. Even though I nominated somebody with more Federal judicial experience than any nominee in history, they want to see Donald Trump fill it with somebody who sees the world as he does. Imagine that. Who would that person be?

The Supreme Court should be above politics. The people on the Bench make monumental decisions that affect every aspect of our daily lives, from a woman's right to choose to your right to vote.

So my most important message is, we cannot take this election for granted. We've got to fight for this thing. There are serious issues at stake in this election behind all the frivolous stuff that gets covered every day.

And let me just make a comment about that. Because, I—look, I'm not running this time, but I sure do get frustrated with the way this campaign is covered. I'm just telling the truth. Guys in the back, I'm just telling you the truth about how I feel about this. Let—do you mind if I just vent for a second?

You know, the—you don't grade the Presidency on a curve. This is serious business. And when we see folks talking about transparency, you want to debate transparency? You've got one candidate in this race who has released de-

cades' worth of her tax returns. The other candidate is the first in decades who refuses to release any at all. You want to debate foundations and charities? One candidate's family foundation has saved countless lives around the world. The other candidate's foundation took money other people gave to his charity and then bought a 6-foot-tall painting of himself. [*Laughter*] I mean, I—he had the taste not to go for the 10-foot version, but—[*laughter*].

You want to debate who's more fit to be our President? One candidate, who's traveled to more countries than any Secretary of State ever has, has more qualifications than pretty much anyone who's ever run for this job; and the other, who isn't fit in any way, shape, or form to represent this country abroad and be its Commander in Chief.

So, somehow, as things go on, because we've become so partisan, our standards for what's normal have changed. And Donald Trump says stuff every day that used to be considered as disqualifying for being President. And yet, because he says it over and over and over again, the press just gives up, and they just say, well, yes, you know, okay. They just stop—"I was opposed to the war in Iraq." Well, actually, he wasn't. But they just accept it.

So the bottom line is, is that we cannot afford suddenly to treat this like a reality show. We can't afford to act as if there's some equivalence here.

To be President, you have to do your homework, and you have to know what you're talking about, and you've got to apply steady judgment, even when things don't go your way. And you've got to make the tough calls, even when they're not popular, even when they take years to pay off. And you've got to be able to handle criticism without taking it personally, just brush it off, and then go ahead and get the job done.

And that's something I learned. And that's what Hillary learned as a Senator and as a Secretary of State and as a First Lady. And yes, she's got her share of critics, just like I do. And she's been caricatured by the right and sometimes by the left. And she's been accused of everything you can imagine and has been subjected to more scrutiny and what I believe is more unfair criticism than anybody out here. And she doesn't complain about it. And you know what, that's what happens when you're under the microscope for 40 years.

But what sets Hillary apart is that through it all, she just keeps on going and she doesn't stop caring and she doesn't stop trying and she never stops fighting for us, even if we haven't always appreciated it.

And look, I understand we're a young country, we are a restless country. We always like the new, shiny thing. I benefited from that when I was a candidate. And we take for granted sometimes what is steady and true. And Hillary Clinton is steady, and she is true. And the young people who are here, who all you've been seeing is just the nonsense that's been on TV. You maybe don't remember all the work that she has had to do and all the things she has had to overcome and all the good that has happened because of her efforts. But you need to remember. You need to understand this.

And if you're serious about our democracy, then you've got to be with her. She's in the arena, and you can't leave her in there by herself. You've got to get in there with her. You can't stay home because, oh, I—she's been around for a long time. Well, you know what? This is not reality TV. Democracy is not a spectator sport. You don't tweet in your vote.

America is not about "yes, he will," it's about "yes, we can." Yes, we can. Yes, we can create more good jobs. Yes, we can create better schools. Yes, we can create safer streets. Yes, we can create a more secure world.

Audience members. Yes, we can! Yes, we can! Yes, we can!

The President. We can bring about real change and real progress. And the time has come for me to pass the baton on, but I know that Hillary is going to take it and she's going to run that race and she will finish that race. And that's why I'm with her. That's why I'm fired up. That's why I'm ready to go. And I need you to join me.

I need you to work as hard for Hillary as you did for me. I need you to knock on doors. I need you to make phone calls.

You've got to talk to your friends, including your Republican friends. You need to go to iwillvote.com and register to vote by October 11. Then you've got to go to the polls, and you've got to get people to go to the polls. And if you're willing to do that with me, we'll win in November. We'll elect Hillary Clinton the next President of the United States. We will continue on this journey to create a better America and a fairer America, a more just America, a more loving America, a brighter America.

That's what we're fighting for. That's why I need you. Let's get busy. Let's get to work.

Thank you, Philadelphia. God bless you. God bless these United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:40 p.m. at the Oval. In his remarks, he referred to Patrick Houston, student, Swarthmore College; Charlotte C. Mezvinsky, granddaughter, and Chelsea Clinton, daughter, of Democratic Presidential nominee Clinton; Republican Presidential nominee Donald J. Trump; Sen. Patrick J. Toomey; President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; and Supreme Court Associate Justice–designate Merrick B. Garland. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Statement on the United States Trade Enforcement Action Against China
September 13, 2016

When American workers, businesses, and farmers have a fair shot to compete in the global economy, we win. And when other countries flout the rules to try and undercut American workers and farmers, we hold them accountable. That's what my administration has done consistently in taking more claims to the World Trade Organization than any other country, and that's exactly what we're doing once again today by filing our latest complaint against China before the WTO.

China's Government has set prices for wheat, corn, and rice well above market levels, which has led to unfair Government subsidies that are in violation of WTO rules. These unfairly distorted prices on important crops lead to overproduction in China and disadvantage American farmers who export these same crops around the world.

This is the 14th WTO case we've launched against China since I took office and the 23d overall, and we've won every case that's been decided. We're confident the case we're bringing today will be no different: it should bring an end to China's illegal subsidies, remove significant barriers on American exports, and level the playing field for American farmers and their families who rely on the rice, wheat, and corn industries and the hundreds of thousands of jobs they help support.

But it's not enough to enforce the existing rules. As our global economy evolves, we have to ensure America plays a leading role in setting the highest standards for the rest of the world to follow. That's what the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP, is all about: putting American workers, farmers, and businesses first. It protects American innovation and intellectual property, enforces groundbreaking environmental and labor commitments, expands export opportunities for our farmers and businesses, and sets the highest benchmarks in history for holding America's trading partners accountable. It's all the more important that we finalize TPP soon, because as we speak, China is negotiating a trade deal of its own, one that would carve up the growing Asia-Pacific markets at our expense, risking American jobs, businesses, and goods. Unless we act now to set our own high standards, the fast-growing Asia-Pacific will be forced to play by lower standard rules that we didn't set. We can't let that happen.

Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Fundraiser in New York City

September 13, 2016

Thank you, everybody. Thank you so much. Everybody have a seat. Well, first of all, let me thank Jim and Crystal for their incredible hospitality and this beautiful home. And we are very, very appreciative of them.

A couple other people I need to acknowledge. First of all, the Chairman of the DCCC, Ben Ray Luján is right here. A thankless job, but he's always got a smile on his face. [*Laughter*]

And I have to introduce somebody who I believe will go down as one of the finest public servants we've ever had and has been a partner on every single thing I've done, especially the tough stuff, because she has principles, she's tough, she's smart, she's practical, and she cares about the right stuff. She cares about all these beautiful grandchildren that she constantly is bringing to these things. [*Laughter*] So I just could not be prouder of her: Nancy Pelosi.

And let me mention New York's own, Steve Israel. Where is Steve? There he is.

So the tradition at these kinds of gatherings, because they're pretty intimate, is I'll just say a few things and then we'll open it up for questions and comments.

Jim stole some of my best lines. [*Laughter*] But let me just amplify the Census report that came out today, which—economists are different. So my chief economist Jason Furman explained to me that this is the Super Bowl for economists, the Census report. I didn't think it was as exciting as a Super Bowl. [*Laughter*] I wouldn't have bought commercials for this event. But this is the most comprehensive snapshot of the economy that we receive each year. And the headline news is that incomes rose last year more than any time on record. More than any time on record, over 5 percent.

And what was particularly striking was that they rose for every demographic: every race, men and women, every quintile. The increases were particularly stark for the lowest income Americans and middle-income Americans, although everybody saw improvement.

Poverty went down last year more sharply than any time since 1968. And the pay gap between men and women closed so that, although it is still there, still nagging, it is now the smallest that it has ever been. It confirmed the reports that we had already seen that the number of uninsured are lower than they have ever been in the United States.

And if you combine that with some of the other statistics that Jim mentioned, the picture we have is not of an economy that is at full potential. There are still a lot of folks out there unemployed, underemployed. Because of a previous decade of flat or declining wage growth, income growth, there is still catching up to do. But what we see is a serious recovery from what was the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression, one in which actually the economy contracted faster than it did in 1929. It's just that we stopped it faster and more effectively than they did during the Great Depression.

Now, this is not a cause to run victory laps, because people do feel as if even if their own circumstances are better, they worry about are their kids going to be able to succeed. They worry about student debt. They worry about the vulnerabilities that were revealed as a consequence of the post-Lehman world. They worry about globalization. They worry about technology. They worry about foreign competition. And those fears are real, and they are justified.

But what it does argue is that we have been moving in the right direction, that the trend lines are sound, that good policy matters, that the decisions we made early—decisions that often were unpopular—paid off. It means that facts and evidence are important and that you need a President and a Congress that makes decisions based on facts and evidence.

So I think you kind of know where I'm going here. We have one Presidential candidate, one set of congressional candidates, who look at the facts, look at the evidence, study policy, and

conclude that climate change is real; that budgets should add up; that we should be investing in infrastructure to put millions of Americans back to work, with ripple effects throughout the economy; that investing in early childhood education is a smart thing to do; that equal pay for equal work will benefit men and women and families; that raising minimum wages in an economy that is increasingly service based is not going to destroy jobs; that putting more money in the pockets of ordinary people and consumers will, in fact, be good for business; that we should be investing in research and development; that we have the capacity to provide health insurance for all Americans and do it smarter and better, with higher quality, more satisfaction, and ultimately lower costs, because we're investing more on the front end than on the back end.

So that's one set of folks. And then you have another set of people who basically believe in the opposite: don't believe in climate change; insist on austerity even when that's bad economics; put forward tax breaks for folks who don't need them, but will explode the deficit; underfund human capital; underfund research; reject the idea that we can develop clean energy in a way that's good for our economy; think that the pay gap between men and women is imaginary or a matter of women's decisions; and want to make sure that women can make the decision to make less money, but not the decision to control their own bodies and their own health care. And it doesn't matter to them that the facts do not match their positions and have been repeatedly refuted.

I mean, one of the things about having a crisis is, is that you actually end up having some interesting experiments playing themselves out over time. So the Republican recipe for economic recovery was actually tried for quite some time in Europe, and they still have not recovered from 2007. But it doesn't matter because their positions are based on ideology.

So I recognize the degree to which politics has been discouraging over the last several years. The Congress has been discouraging over the last several years, since Nancy Pelosi wasn't Speaker. And the degree to which the current majorities in the House and the Senate—but we're focused here on the House today—can't even pass their own priorities, so that I don't generally even have to veto anything because they can't get organized enough even to present the cockamamie legislation that they're interested in passing—[*laughter*]—I recognize must be discouraging for people.

And we get all these strange distractions of—here's one that's coming up. There's a strong faction in the House of Representatives right now whose major priority is impeaching our IRS Commissioner. You're laughing. This is, like, a big deal. This has never happened before. And the reason, is not because this guy is venal or he somehow stole money or abused his office. The reason is, is because stuff that happened before he even got into office. He responded to inquiries from one of the many congressional hearings to try to ferret out a scandal and, I guess, left some documents out inadvertently, and they decided, well, this is a good reason to impeach the guy. This is crazy. And yes, no wonder then, people end up being discouraged and dispirited.

So we have made progress despite an opposition party, which has been now in the majority in Congress for the last 2 years, which is not functioning. Look, I recognize I am the head of the Democratic Party and that necessarily makes me a partisan. But I'm actually not somebody who believes Democrat—I think back to 2008, and I meant what I said. I don't think any party traditionally has a monopoly on what's right. I come from the Land of Lincoln. Richard Nixon set up the EPA. The Civil Rights Act was passed by Lyndon Johnson, but also a whole bunch of Republican votes. So it's not inevitable that this is what we deal with, but it is what's going on right now.

And that is why you have to take this race so seriously. It is a cliche that every election is the most important in our lifetime. But I've got to tell you—[*laughter*]—this one? This one counts. You have a nominee of a major party that shows no awareness of just basic, rudimentary domestic or foreign policy; advertises his ignorance every day; who proclaims his role

model for leadership is Vladimir Putin. Think about that.

This is the party that extolls freedom and America and the flag and Ronald Reagan, and whose main criticism of me lately has been my tyrannical abuse of power: that I'm trying to take away their guns and I'm filing executive actions and I'm circumventing the Constitution. And we're going to nominate the guy who actively promotes and admires a guy who jails dissidents and controls all state media, all media in his country, and hence has an 82-percent approval rating.

Can you imagine what my approval rating would be if all those folks lined up in the back worked for me—[*laughter*]—and I was writing their stories? Wow. [*Laughter*] I'd be doing really well. I'm doing okay as it is, but—so you've got that, but also somebody who's explicitly tapping into some of the worst impulses in each of us, the notion that somebody who's not like me is bad, is dangerous, is not a real American.

And we followed that path before. That's woven into our history. And it's woven into world history, and it usually turns out really badly.

And we have a Congress that purports to want to be a champion for working class and middle class folks, but cannot describe any concrete proposals that would actually help the working class and the middle class and deal with the challenges of this new global economy.

So I say all this because this shouldn't be close, but it's close. The Presidential race we should win, but Donald Trump got the nomination, so weird stuff happens. [*Laughter*] The House we have a chance to win because the Republican nominee has revealed the dysfunction of that party for quite some time. But it's hard. Because of gerrymandering and entrenched incumbents, it's going to be challenging. But we have a chance.

So we have to make this investment now. And I'm not on the ballot, and in 6 months, I'll be a private citizen once again. But I have two daughters, and I hope I'll have some grandkids—not too soon. [*Laughter*] But sometime. And I genuinely believe that the basic character of this country and our capacity to meet the challenges that all of you are aware of is dependent on what happens now. The stakes are really high.

So I need all of you to step up. And if you do, I think that the American people will make the right choice and Nancy Pelosi will be Speaker again and Hillary Clinton will be President, and Chuck Schumer of New York will be Majority Leader. And we'll have a burst of productivity like we did the last time we had a Democratic President and Democratic majority, and we'll lay the groundwork for more prosperity and security in the future.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:10 p.m. at the residence of James S. Chanos and Crystal Connors. In his remarks, he referred to Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton; Republican Presidential nominee Donald J. Trump; and President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting With State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma and an Exchange With Reporters
September 14, 2016

President Obama. It is an extraordinary pleasure for me to welcome State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi and her delegation to the White House. This is not her first visit to the Oval Office, but it is her first visit in her official capacity. And it represents a remarkable process that Burma is undergoing.

When I was first elected, Daw Suu was still under house arrest. And because, in part, of advocacy by the United States and others in the international community, but more importantly,

because of the courage and the strength and resilience of the Burmese people, what we've seen over the last several years is a transition to elections, a representative legislature that still has significant constraints from the previous military Government, but is giving voice to the hopes and dreams of a new generation of Burmese people. And as a consequence, now Aung San Suu Kyi, as State Counselor, Foreign Minister, is in a position with her Government to begin shaping a remarkable social and political transformation and economic transformation there.

In part, because of the progress that we've seen over the last several months, I indicated, after consulting with Daw Suu, that the United States is now prepared to lift sanctions that we have imposed on Burma for quite some time. It is the right thing to do in order to ensure that the people of Burma see rewards from a new way of doing business and a new Government.

At the same time, we're also going to be restoring the Generalized System of Preferences, which provides very important commercial and trading advantages for poorer countries as they enter into the global economy. And if you combine those two efforts, I think this will give the United States, our businesses, our nonprofit institutions, greater incentive to invest and participate in what we hope will be an increasingly democratic and prosperous partner for us in the region.

In addition to the political transition that's taken place, the economic reforms that are being initiated, Daw Suu has also helped to convene a peace conference so that the various ethnic groups and armed conflicts that have plagued this country for far too long can begin to be resolved. There's a process of beginning to reach out and address some of the ethnic minorities, including in Rakhine State, that historically feel discrimination. And so there's a broader process of transformation, reconciliation, and hope that has emerged in a country that for decades was burdened by a military dictatorship and closed off from the world.

And I can tell you that when I visited as the first U.S. President ever to travel there, I could see the enormous potential that was about to be unleashed, and nobody represented that better than Aung San Suu Kyi.

So we are very hopeful about the future. We are hopeful about building on the friendship and partnership that we've already established, not just with the new Government, but more importantly, with the Burmese people.

I would encourage Americans who have the opportunity at some point to travel to Burma, to do so. It is a beautiful country with a rich culture and wonderful people. And I think, if I'm not mistaken, there is a very welcome tourist industry that is developing.

So we look forward to partnering with you, Madam State Counselor, on a whole range of issues. And congratulations on the progress that's been made. It is not complete, and I think Daw Suu is the first one to indicate that a lot of work remains to be done, but it's on the right track. And if you had predicted 5 years ago that Aung San Suu Kyi would now be here sitting as the duly elected representative of her country, many people would have been skeptical. But it's a good-news story in an era in which so often we see countries going in the opposite direction.

Thank you.

State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi. Well, I need hardly say that I'm very happy to be here, because this is an opportunity for me to thank all the people of the United States who helped us along our democratic struggle. It's not yet at an end. We have reached a point where, as President Obama said, people did not expect us to reach 5 years ago, although we were quite confident that we'd get here. But now we have to go ahead.

There's so much that has to be done in our country. And our party always said the most important thing was national reconciliation and peace.

In my country, fighting has been going on for decades, ever since we became an independent nation. We've never known a time when there is peace throughout the country. There was always fighting going on at some time, or someplace or the other. There are officially 135 ethnic groups in our country, and to keep

them all united and keep them all to one purpose is not an easy matter. But we think that we can do that. We think that we can do that because what all of us want is a truly democratic, federal union, a union in which we can create true strength out of diversity, in which we can celebrate our diversity as our greatest resource, our greatest richness. We are trying to do that now, and we are grateful to all our friends—of course, the United States more than included—who have been helping us in this process.

But unity also means prosperity, because people, when they have to fight over limited resources, forget that standing together is important. So we want to develop our material resources. We want to make sure that our people are better off materially in order to strengthen our political initiatives. It's not just a peace process; it's also the commission that we formed, headed by Dr. Kofi Annan, to look into matters in the Rakhine State. Communal strife is not something that we can ignore. It's too important; it's too serious for us to leave even until the next year.

So this is one of the first initiatives we have taken, forming this commission to look into communal strife and tensions within the Rakhine State. We want everybody who is a citizen of our country to be entitled to the full rights of citizens. And we want to make sure that everybody who is entitled to citizenship is accorded citizenship as quickly and as fairly as possible. And this is what we are trying to do in Rakhine. And we hope that the world will recognize that we are sincere in trying to bring together the different communities in what is a very poor state with tremendous potential.

If we could all come together, to help them to develop this potential and to eliminate the poverty that so destroys the unity, I think it would be helping not just one country, but the world at large, by proving that divisions can be overcome; that we can create unity out of diversity; that we can put aside suspicion and misunderstandings, and come to an agreement; that we can all put this together.

The United States Congress has been more than friendly towards our efforts towards democratic reform, and over the years, they have done many things for us. And as we all know, sanctions have been one of the many steps they took in order to push democratic reforms in our country. We think that this time has now come to remove all the sanctions that hurt us economically, because our country is in a position to open up to those who are interested in taking part in our economic enterprises. We would like to invite all of you to come to see our country, to see why you should invest there, and see how you can invest there in such a way that you will benefit from it as much as we can.

I've always said that I have no use for businessmen who are incapable of making profits, so I expect your businessmen to come to our country to make profits so that they can make profits for us as well. If you can't look after yourself, you certainly can't look after other people. So we are very interested in successful companies, successful business enterprises coming to Burma, to looking around and to making new use of the opportunities open to them. Our new investment law will be adopted by the legislature quite soon, we hope within the next few weeks. And what with the lifting of sanctions and the new investment law, which I hope will be very attractive to many people all over the world, we think that our country is in a position to take off.

But for us, economic development is just part of the democratic process that we want to encourage in our country. There is still a lot to be done. We have a Constitution which is not entirely democratic because it gives the military a special place in politics. We are very—I am—[*inaudible*]—personally, very attached to our military because the army was founded by my father. And I want our military to be an honorable institution, loved and respected by the people, and capable of protecting and defending our rights and our honor in this world. But we do not think that politics is a place for the military.

So we will continue with our efforts to amend our Constitution, to make our country the truly democratic union that our founding fathers dreamt of. And we look to the United

States and our friends to continue with us along the road of progress: progress politically, progress socially, and economically. And we look forward to the day when we can say that we, too, are in a position to help those less fortunate than we are in this world.

Now I would like to take this opportunity to thank not just the people of the United States and the United States Congress and all the various nongovernmental organizations and individuals that have helped us, but also to President Obama personally for coming out to our country as the first American President ever to have done so and to recognize the potential of our people, especially our young people.

Thank you.

President Obama. Thank you so much. Thank you.

Thank you, everybody.

U.S. Economic Sanctions Against Burma

Q. What's the timetable for lifting sanctions?

President Obama. Soon.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:27 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In her remarks, State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi referred to former Secretary-General Kofi A. Annan of the United Nations.

Joint Statement by President Obama and State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma

September 14, 2016

At the invitation of President Barack Obama, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, is on an official visit to Washington, D.C. in September 2016. During the visit, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and President Obama held a meeting on September 14 in the White House and adopted this joint statement.

Both leaders remarked on the tremendous change in Myanmar over the past five years, during which time Myanmar moved from a military government through a period of opening, held free and fair elections in November 2015, and inaugurated a new, democratically elected government in March 2016. State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi expressed her appreciation for the role played by the United States and other members of the international community in encouraging and supporting this transformation, and President Obama affirmed continued U.S. support for Myanmar's democratic transition. Both leaders noted that Myanmar's transition has allowed for a dramatic change in the bilateral relationship, creating opportunities to build a robust, multi-faceted partnership for the mutual benefit of both countries.

The State Counsellor reiterated to the President her commitment to furthering Myanmar's democratic transition by pursuing peace, national reconciliation, and inclusive growth. She expressed her belief that the 21st Century Panglong process, inaugurated on August, 31, 2016, would lead to a lasting peace with armed ethnic groups and help the people of Myanmar build an inclusive Union that embraced the country's rich diversity. She stressed her government's commitment to the resolution of the complex political, economic, and humanitarian challenges in Rakhine State and the development of the state's economic potential. Noting that peace, national reconciliation, and inclusive economic growth were mutually reinforcing, the State Counsellor described the range of economic policies the Government of Myanmar was pursuing to develop its economy. She stressed that Myanmar welcomes international investment to help promote strong, inclusive, and long-term economic growth and asked that the United States lift remaining sanctions on Myanmar to encourage this investment and in recognition of the steps Myanmar has taken toward democratization.

The President told the State Counsellor that the primary focus of U.S. policy toward Myan-

mar was to help Myanmar succeed. He reiterated that the United States would continue its strong support, both diplomatically and through assistance programs, for the priorities expressed by the State Counsellor. He welcomed the Myanmar government's initiatives to address the longstanding concerns of all communities in Rakhine State, including the establishment of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State chaired by Mr. Kofi Annan, former Secretary General of the United Nations. The President expressed his hope that all parties to civil conflict in Myanmar would seize the opportunity offered by the 21st Century Panglong process to seek peace and build the foundations for a democratic, federal Union through dialogue. The President affirmed the importance of the role of civil society in the pursuit of Myanmar's national development goals and the promotion and protection of human rights and democratic governance. The President expressed his commitment to helping Myanmar achieve inclusive economic growth, both through continued assistance and by changes to U.S. policy designed to encourage responsible investment in Myanmar. Concurring with the State Counsellor on the importance of the rule of law, the President said the United States would continue to support Myanmar's efforts to develop domestic institutions to promote the rule of law and would work closely with Myanmar and other partners in ASEAN to address regional and transnational challenges including nonproliferation and countering the scourge of drugs, terrorism, and extremism.

The President and the State Counsellor committed to mark this new era in the bilateral relationship by announcing a U.S.-Myanmar Partnership. This partnership, anchored by annual dialogues led by the U.S. Department of State and Myanmar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, will allow the two countries to broaden and deepen their cooperation across a range of sectors. To further this effort, the President and the State Counsellor committed to collaborate on the following steps:

- Recognizing the progress toward democratic transition that Myanmar has achieved, including through the election of a civilian-led government, and in an effort to support inclusive economic growth, the United States will terminate the National Emergency with respect to Myanmar and will revoke the Executive Order-based framework of the Burma sanctions program.
- The United States will restore Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) trade benefits to Myanmar in light of progress on a number of fronts, including strengthening protections for internationally recognized worker rights.
- The United States and Myanmar commit to continued cooperation in addressing remaining challenges, such as strengthening the rule of law, promoting respect for human rights, countering trafficking in persons, combatting corruption, and advancing anti-money laundering efforts and counter-narcotics activities.
- The United States and Myanmar recognize their shared interest in enhancing bilateral economic engagement and exchanging views on laws and practices that affect bilateral investment flows and foreign investment, including the elements of a high-standard Bilateral Investment Treaty.
- The United States and Myanmar recognized the important role of small and growing businesses in supporting inclusive economic growth. The United States intends to sign a loan guarantee with five local microfinance institutions to support over $10 million in loans to small businesses in Myanmar, which will increase access to food and support employment opportunities for communities in Myanmar.
- The United States and Myanmar commit to continued cooperation in addressing remaining challenges, such as strengthening the rule of law, promoting respect for human rights, countering trafficking

in persons, combatting corruption, and advancing counter-narcotics activities.

- The United States and Myanmar are committed to advancing global health security. In 2017, Myanmar will complete and publish a Joint External Evaluation (JEE) of national capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to infectious disease threats. The United States completed and published a JEE in 2016.
- The United States and Myanmar will expand people-to-people ties including by augmenting English-language instruction with additional training for 1500 English teachers, by expanding U.S. educational advising across Myanmar by 50 percent for students interested in studying in the United States, and by launching a new exchange program for Myanmar leaders that will provide expertise in democratic governance.
- The United States and Myanmar look forward to the arrival of the first group of Peace Corps volunteers, who will train English teachers as well as teach students in middle and high schools.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Message to the Congress on Modifying Duty-Free Treatment Under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) Program for Burma
September 14, 2016

To the Congress of the United States:

I am writing to inform you of my intent to end the suspension of preferential treatment for Burma as a beneficiary developing country under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program, and to designate Burma as a least-developed beneficiary developing country for purposes of the GSP program. I have carefully considered the criteria set forth in sections 501 and 502(c) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2461, 2462(c)). After considering the criteria set forth in section 502(c), I have determined that it is appropriate to add Burma to the list of GSP beneficiary developing countries in the Harmonized Tariff Schedule (HTS) of the United States. After considering the criteria set forth in sections 501 and 502(c), I have determined that it is appropriate to add Burma to the list of GSP least-developed beneficiary developing countries in the HTS.

I submit this notice in accordance with section 502(f)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2462(f)(1)).

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
September 14, 2016.

NOTE: The proclamation is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Memorandum of Understanding Between the United States and Israel
September 14, 2016

As I have said repeatedly, America's commitment to Israel's security is unshakeable. Over the past 8 years, my administration has time and again demonstrated this commitment in word and deed. Since fiscal year 2009, the United States has provided Israel with $23.6 billion in foreign military financing (FMF) funds and another $3.4 billion in funding for missile defense. The new 10-year memorandum of understanding (MOU) on security assistance that my administration signed with the Government of Israel today is just the most re-

cent reflection of my steadfast commitment to the security of the State of Israel. The new MOU constitutes the single largest pledge of military assistance in U.S. history, totaling $38 billion over 10 years, including $33 billion in FMF funds and an additional $5 billion in missile defense funding. Both Prime Minister Netanyahu and I are confident that the new MOU will make a significant contribution to Israel's security in what remains a dangerous neighborhood. The continued supply of the world's most advanced weapons technology will ensure that Israel has the ability to defend itself from all manner of threats.

For as long as the State of Israel has existed, the United States has been Israel's greatest friend and partner, a fact underscored again today. This commitment to Israel's security has been unwavering and is based on a genuine and abiding concern for the welfare of the Israeli people and the future of the State of Israel. It is because of this same commitment to Israel and its long-term security that we will also continue to press for a two-state solution to the longstanding Israeli-Palestinian conflict, despite the deeply troubling trends on the ground that undermine this goal. As I have emphasized previously, the only way for Israel to endure and thrive as a Jewish and democratic state is through the realization of an independent and viable Palestine. Ultimately, both this MOU and efforts to advance the two-state solution are motivated by the same core U.S. objective that has been shared by all administrations—Democratic and Republican, over the last several decades, ensuring that Israelis can live alongside their neighbors in peace and security.

Message to the Congress on Termination of the National Emergency With Respect to the Situation in or in Relation to Côte d'Ivoire
September 14, 2016

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with subsection 204(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(b), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order that terminates the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13396 of February 7, 2006, and revokes that Executive Order.

The President issued Executive Order 13396 to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States constituted by the situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire, which had resulted in the massacre of large numbers of civilians, widespread human rights abuses, significant political violence and unrest, and attacks against international peacekeeping forces leading to fatalities. In Executive Order 13396, the President addressed that threat by blocking the property and interests in property of, among others, persons determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, after consultation with the Secretary of State, to constitute a threat to the peace and national reconciliation process in Côte d'Ivoire, to be responsible for serious violations of international law in Côte d'Ivoire, or to have supplied arms to Côte d'Ivoire. Executive Order 13396 also implemented United States sanctions obligations under United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1572 and subsequent resolutions.

I have determined that the situation in or in relation to Côte d'Ivoire that gave rise to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13396 has improved significantly as a result of the progress achieved in the stabilization of Côte d'Ivoire, including the successful conduct of the October 2015 presidential election, progress on the management of arms and related materiel, and the combating of illicit trafficking of natural resources. With these advancements, and with the United Nations Security Council's termination of sanctions obligations on April 28, 2016, in UNSCR 2283, there is no further need for the blocking of assets and other sanctions measures imposed by Executive Order 13396. For these reasons I have determined that it is necessary to

terminate the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13396 and revoke that order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
September 14, 2016.

NOTE: The message referred to Executive Order 13739, which is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the Our Ocean Conference at the Department of State
September 15, 2016

Thank you, everybody. Have a seat. Well, thanks, John, for the introduction and the vision to create this conference.

I am obviously grateful to John Kerry for a whole host of reasons. But one thing that we all owe to John is his conviction that a healthier ocean and a healthier planet are about more than just our environment, they are also vital to our foreign policy and to our national security. And so he has elevated the profile of climate change, ocean protection to the point where we have conversations about this not just in the Oval Office, but in the Situation Room. And that is critical in helping us mobilize all of Government around the issues that all of you care so deeply about.

And it is no wonder that John feels this way. Our Secretary of State is the descendant of sea merchants and sailors. He's a Navy veteran himself. So, in a lot of ways, the ocean is in his blood. Many years ago, John's father passed to his son a sailor's love of the sea, its wonder and its beauty and its power. But John's dad also loved what he called "the sailor's environment": reading the weather and the waves and the different ways that one adapts to the ocean.

Of course, the problem that confronts all of us today is that we're asking far too much of our ocean in asking it to adapt to us.

And John's right that this is also personal for me. I grew up in Hawaii. The ocean's really nice there. [*Laughter*] And anybody who grows up on an island—certainly, those of us who grew up in Hawaii—learn to appreciate very early on its magic, how it inspires awe, and sometimes, if the waves are a little too big and you've gone a little too far out, how it inspires fear—[*laughter*]—and a healthy respect.

And the notion that the ocean I grew up with is not something that I can pass on to my kids and my grandkids is unacceptable. It's unimaginable. And so the investment that all of us together make here today is vital for our economy, it is vital for our foreign policy, it's vital for our national security, but it's also vital for our spirit. It's vital to who we are.

Dangerous changes in our climate, caused mainly by human activity; dead zones in our ocean, caused mainly by pollution that we create here on land; unsustainable fishing practices; unprotected marine areas, in which rare species and entire ecosystems are at risk—all those things are happening now. They've been happening for a long time. So, if we're going to leave our children with oceans like the ones that were left to us, then we're going to have to act. And we're going to have to act boldly.

And that's why the pledges and the partnerships from all of you at Our Oceans Conference are so vital. The more than $4 billion that governments and philanthropies committed towards conservation at the first two gatherings, here in Washington and in Chile; the more than 2 million square miles of ocean we came together to protect over these last 2 years, and what you'll add to those totals this week through more than 100 new initiatives and contributions—all of that's going to make a difference. It's probably not enough, but it's a pretty good down payment. And more importantly, it's signaling the fact that just as we did with the Paris Agreement, increasingly, we are able to construct an international architecture that addresses some of these most vital environmental challenges in a serious way.

One of the reasons I ran for President was to make sure that America does our part to pro-

tect our planet for future generations. And I am very proud that America has become a global leader in the fight against climate change, from tripling the electricity we get from wind, multiplying solar electric power more than thirtyfold, to the Clean Power Plan that will limit the pollution we spew into our skies, to our role in rallying nearly 200 nations around the Paris Agreement and our work that continues to bring it into force this year.

We cannot truly protect our planet without protecting our ocean. I have not gone to as many countries as John has. Few humans have. [*Laughter*] And I've got to say, by the way, he never looks tired—[*laughter*]—which is impressive. But whenever I go abroad, including to many of the countries that are represented by heads of state and Foreign Ministers and other high-ranking officials here, I set aside time to talk to young people. And they rarely ask about poll numbers and political gaffes and whatever is flashing across the little trailer at the bottom of the newscast. They give you a sense of what's really important: what haunts them and what inspires them.

And on my very first overseas trip as President, I held a town hall in France, where a young woman asked me about sustainability. Then, a few days later in Turkey, the first question I got was about climate change. The same thing happened last year in Malaysia. Just last week, in Laos, another young person asked me what I'm doing to protect our lands and waters.

So the generation behind us, they understand what's at stake.

It's been said that we don't inherit the Earth from our parents so much as we borrow it from our children. They know that. Our children prove every day that they care deeply about this planet. Their right to inherit a healthy planet is a sacred responsibility for all of us. And how we treat our oceans is a big part of that burden.

Now, at an Oceans Conference, with a bunch of experts, I assume I don't have to tell you that oceans are pretty important. [*Laughter*] The—you guys know this. But for those of you who are listening outside the hall, it is the dominant feature of our planet. It's why we share a blue marble, as opposed to a brown or gray one. Our oceans feed us, protect us, regulate our climate, our weather, anchors industries from transportation to tourism to trade of all kind. The health of our planet's oceans determine in large part the health of our own bodies and the health of our economies. And while it is our oceans' contours that shape our coastlines, it is what we decide and do here that will shape our oceans' future.

And that's why my administration has protected more waters than any in history. We established the first-ever national oceans policy, which brings together government leaders with fishermen and boaters and researchers and everyday citizens and ensures the decisions we make and resources we use are grounded in science. We cracked down on illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. We've created and expanded marine sanctuaries. And, as John mentioned, just last month we created the largest marine protected area on Earth. It is now twice the size of Texas, home to more than 7,000 species, including some that are endangered and threatened.

Our conservation efforts and our obligations to combat climate change, in fact, go hand in hand because marine areas already have enough to worry about, with overfishing and ship traffic and pollution, like those patches of plastic waste floating in the Pacific and the invisible pollutants like carbon that we cannot see. The more of those threats that we eliminate through conservation, the more resilient those ecosystems will be to the consequences of climate change.

So today we're building on this approach by establishing the first marine national monument in the Atlantic. We're protecting fragile ecosystems off the coast of New England, including pristine underseas canyons and seamounts. We're helping make the oceans more resilient to climate change. And this will help fishermen better understand the changes that are taking place that will affect their livelihood, and we're doing it in a way that respects the fishing industry's unique role in New England's economy and history.

So I'm proud of what America's done, that we are doing our share. But it's no secret that we're all going to have to do a lot more, and we're going to have to do it fast. And that's why it's so critical that the tradition of this conference continues after John and I leave this office. That the EU so quickly raised its hand to host next year's Our Ocean Conference is a testament to the fact that these challenges demand collective action and deserve the world's attention. It's a recognition of the reality that the ocean's health is our health, and we've got our work cut out for us.

The ocean acts like a sponge, absorbing most of the extra heat caused by our greenhouse gases. And it's been growing warmer and more acidic for decades now. In other words, the very chemistry of our oceans is changing, which is risking marine life and rippling all the way up the food chain. As oceans warm and sea levels rise, our lives and livelihoods are likely to change too: homes becoming uninhabitable, floods devastating communities, crops withering, industries like fishing disrupted. Cultures that have coexisted with the ocean for millennia are forced to flee to higher ground.

This is not a far-off problem; it's happening as we speak. It's happening here in America. By the end of this century, nearly one in five homes in John's hometown of Boston could be at risk; the same for a quarter of the homes of my childhood home of Hawaii.

I spent my childhood on those shores, looking out over the endless ocean, and was humbled by it. And I know that, in a contest between us and the oceans, eventually, the oceans will win one way or the other. So it's us that has to adapt, not the other way around.

Our oceans' very vastness, however, presents another threat: We don't touch the depths of the ocean in the course of our day. We don't see it—we don't see the effects of climate change every single day with our own eyes. We just see this great, big ocean; we assume that it's too big to be wrecked. It's easy, as a consequence, to dismiss the urgency of the challenge. But part of what I hope this conference is about is recognizing that we cannot shy away from problems because they're too big. We cannot pretend that the problems don't exist because we're going to have to make some changes in our own ways of doing business in order to confront them. Instead, we have to come together, and we've got to find solutions. And we can.

One of the most—well, let me close with two stories, I'm going a little off script. One of the most encouraging things that I heard this year, a year full of tough news in various places around the world, is the news that many of you heard that the hole in the ozone was actually shrinking. Now, for those of us of a certain age, you'll remember, that was quite worrisome. We weren't really sure what the ozone layer did, but the idea that there was a big hole in it was a problem. [*Laughter*] And I remember as we slowly began to phase out aerosol deodorant cans, which were kind of noxious anyway, because when you sprayed them, you couldn't breathe, so you knew they weren't really that good for you—[*laughter*]—it felt like a nice thing to do. But I don't know about you. I was not convinced that this was actually going to solve the problem and that whatever it is that was going to happen to these ozone layers up there, that it was just going to keep on getting worse.

And lo and behold, just this year, we get reports back that actually that hole that we had blew in the ozone layer began to shrink. And by the way, we figured out other ways to produce deodorant. [*Laughter*] I say that because it gives you a sense of human ingenuity. When we make up our minds to do something, we can do it.

The same was true with acid rain in much of North America. People were skeptical, thought it was going to be too expensive to try to figure this out. We figured it out. Nobody talks about it anymore. My kids don't know what acid rain is. That has to be a cause for optimism.

These are problems we can solve. And part of the power of conferences like this is to insist on human agency, to not give in to hopelessness, or to suggest that somehow this—these problems are just too big. We can solve them.

We just have to have the will to pursue collective action.

And the second thing I'll just end with is the trip we took to Midway, which is right in the center of this new marine preserve. And as many of you know, this is a historic monument not only for conservation reasons, but because this was a major turning point for the war during World War II. At its peak, it—there were about 5,000, 6,000 troops on this island. Now there are exactly 45 people and 3 million birds, I think it is. [*Laughter*] The population—the bird population had shrunk drastically, and then we figured out that if you eliminated some of the people and the rats that the people had brought to the island, the birds would actually do pretty good. And they are thriving.

And so we drove around and went to a beach in which there were six or seven turtles on—lying in the sun. And we have sea turtles down in Hawaii. In fact, they nest up around Midway and then come down to Oahu and the beaches where I used to bodysurf. But we'd never see them on the beach. But up in Midway, they didn't have people chasing them away, and so they felt pretty comfortable. It turns out, they like sun when we're not overcrowding the beaches.

And then we went out snorkeling. And the coral was purple and it was orange, and there were monk seals sunning themselves on some rocks. And one of them dove in, which made one of the people on my team, who I shall not name, pretty nervous. [*Laughter*] And we spent the afternoon looking at this incredible variety of fish. And we had to leave before 5:30 because that's when the birds start coming back, and then you're plain stuck, because you can't fight the birds.

And that, too, was a great cause for optimism because it reminded us that nature is actually resilient if we take care to just stop actively destroying it; that it will come back. And certainly the oceans can come back if we take the steps that are necessary. I saw it. It was right there, evidence of the incredible power of nature to rebuild itself if we're not consistently trying to tear it down.

So I wanted to leave you with those two images just to remind us that what you are doing here is important and that we can be successful. It is going to require work. It is going to require vision. It will require occasional sacrifice. But as long as we make sure that the sacrifices are not borne just by a few people, but are spread broadly and fairly and justly, then my hope is, is that my children and your children and our grandchildren, they'll be able to take that trip to Midway at some point, and they'll be able to watch seals swimming through water. And they'll thank us for it. And we will have done what is probably the most important thing that you can do on this planet Earth, and that is, make sure that you're making it just a little bit better for future generations.

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:14 a.m. in the Loy Henderson International Conference Room. In his remarks, he referred to Proclamation 9496, signed September 15, which established the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument and is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Death of Former Governor Rose Mofford of Arizona
September 15, 2016

Michelle and I were saddened to learn of the passing of former Arizona Governor Rose Mofford. Rose was once fired from a government position because her boss "felt it was better to have a man in that particular job." But she was undeterred, eventually rising to become secretary of state and then Governor, the first woman in Arizona to hold that office. In all, her career in public service spanned more than a half-century. It's a story of tireless service, steady leadership, and a trailblazing spirit that inspired not only a State where three more women would eventually follow her in office, but an entire country. Rose showed us all what to do when somebody says we're not good enough because of who we are: Don't believe

it. Our thoughts and prayers are with Rose's family and friends as they remember and celebrate her example.

NOTE: The statement referred to former Govs. Jane Dee Hull, Janet A. Napolitano, and Janice K. Brewer of Arizona.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Persons Who Commit, Threaten To Commit, or Support Terrorism

September 15, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism declared in Executive Order 13224 of September 23, 2001, is to continue in effect beyond September 23, 2016.

The crisis constituted by the grave acts of terrorism and threats of terrorism committed by foreign terrorists, including the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, in New York and Pennsylvania and against the Pentagon, and the continuing and immediate threat of further attacks on United States nationals or the United States that led to the declaration of a national emergency on September 23, 2001, has not been resolved. These actions continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13224 with respect to persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Annual Awards Gala

September 15, 2016

The President. Buenas noches! It is always great to be here, with one of the most festive—maybe a little wild—caucuses in Congress, especially to kick off Hispanic Heritage Month.

I want to thank Michelle for her introduction, for her leadership. And give it up for your outstanding chair, Congresswoman Linda Sánchez; CHCI's new president and CEO Domenika Lynch; and all the tremendous public servants that we have here tonight, especially everybody in the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

Audience member. Amen.

The President. Amen? Is that what I heard? [*Laughter*] Amen. [*Laughter*]

Now, I've got to admit that I'm having trouble accepting that this is my final trip here as President.

Audience members. No!

The President. But on the bright side, Michelle is not having trouble accepting it. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. We love you, Obama!

The President. I love you too!

But it is hard to believe that it was 8 years ago I came here as a candidate for this office. And I had no gray hair. [*Laughter*] I said that

we could create opportunity not just for those at the very top, but for everybody who was willing to work hard, so that they could afford health care and college and retirement, and give their kids a better life, what Sarah Palin called "that hopey-changey stuff." [*Laughter*]

Well, tonight I'm back here as President to say thank you. Thank you for your support. Thank you for your friendship. Thank you for your tireless efforts to deliver on that promise. Because for all the places that we've fallen short, and for all the work that remains to be done, I am back here tonight more optimistic about the future of America than I have ever been.

And why not? Together, we fought our way back from the worst recession in 80 years. We turned around an economic free fall. We helped lift our auto industry to set new records. Our businesses created more than 15 million new jobs. Together, we declared health care is not a privilege for a few, but a right for everybody. And we have secured health insurance for another 20 million Americans, including 4 million Hispanic Americans.

Our high school graduation rate is at an all-time high. More Hispanic students are graduating high school and college than ever before. We strengthened our relationship with Mexico and Central America and opened up a new chapter with the people of Cuba. We brought nearly 200 nations together around a climate agreement that could save our planet. We affirmed that love has no limits, and marriage equality is now the law of the land.

Just this week, we discovered how much our efforts are starting to pay off in ways that really matter to American families.

Audience member. Thanks, Obama!

The President. Thanks, Obama! [*Laughter*]

We learned that last year, across every race, across every age group in America, incomes rose, and poverty fell. The typical household income grew by about $2,800, which is the single biggest 1-year increase on record. We lifted 3.5 million people out of poverty, the largest 1-year drop since 1968. The number of Americans without health insurance continues to fall, and in each of these areas, Latino Americans made some of the largest gains: the fastest income growth, the biggest drop in the poverty rate, the greatest gains in insurance coverage. That's why, all in all, Hispanic families are feeling more optimistic about their prospects today than they did 8 years ago.

By so many measures, our country is stronger and more prosperous than it was when we started this journey together. And we couldn't have done it without the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, who has been with me every step of the way.

Now, none of this was easy. There were some tough years in there. You had fiscal showdowns and Government shutdowns and pandemics and oil spills and pirates. You all remember the pirates? [*Laughter*] I mean, the only thing we haven't had to deal with is, like, the asteroid or the aliens. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. Don't jinx us!

The President. That's true. Good point. [*Laughter*]

[*At this point, the President knocked on the wood podium.*]

The President. Shouldn't have mentioned the aliens. [*Laughter*]

But we overcame all that. We overcame all that, and most of all, we proved that change doesn't happen overnight. It doesn't happen in one term. It doesn't happen even over the course of one Presidency, but change is possible. Progress is possible.

Audience member. Si, se puede!

The President. Si, se puede. We're here again tonight because we know that we've got more work to do, but we know that if we put in the effort, change can happen.

Audience member. That's right!

The President. You know firsthand the challenges we still face, challenges that often affect the Latino community harshly. When Governors refuse to expand Medicaid, that hits Latinos harder than most. When folks block an increase in the minimum wage or refuse to expand paid family leave, that hurts the pocketbooks of millions of Hispanic families. So we've got to make sure this recovery reaches all Americans. We've got to help more students

not just get to college, but finish college. We've got to reform our criminal justice system, and we've got to protect our children from the madness of gun violence. And yes, we've got to finally make meaningful, effective immigration reform a reality in this country.

Now, I'm proud of the executive actions I've taken to modernize our system. I'm proud of the work we've done to help show more than 740,000 DREAMers that the country they grew up in, the country they love, believes that they are worthy of this country's blessings, just like your kids, just like my kids. But if we're truly going to fix this broken system, then we're going to have to push back against bluster and falsehoods and promises of higher walls.

We need a comprehensive solution that works for our families and our businesses, that grows our economy, that enhances our culture. We need an approach that upholds our tradition as a nation of immigrants and a nation of laws. And it is possible to do that.

It's possible to insist on a lawful and orderly system while still seeing students and their hard-working parents not as criminals, not as rapists, but as families who came here for the same reasons that all immigrants came here: to work and to learn and to build a better life.

And look, throughout this political season, the talk around these issues has cut deeper than in years past. It's a little more personal. It's a little meaner, a little uglier. And folks are betting that if they can drive us far enough apart, and if they can put down enough of us because of where we come from or what we look like or what religion we practice, then that may pay off at the polls.

But I'm telling you that's a bet they're going to lose. We've seen this kind of ugliness and anger and vitriol before. That kind of politics sometimes may carry the day in the short term.

I know that there are a lot of folks who had this notion of what the "real America" looks like, and somehow, it only includes a few of us. But who is going to decide who the real America is?

Audience members. We are!

The President. Who is to determine that in this Nation of immigrants, in a nation where unless you are a Native American, you came here from somebody—someplace else, that you have a greater claim than anybody here?

So we can't let that brand of politics win. And if we band together and if we organize our communities, if we deliver enough votes, then the better angels of our nature will carry the day, and progress will happen. But it's going to take all of us. This is not something that a President can do alone. It's not something the next President will be able to do alone either, no matter how tough she is.

So we've got to work to get a Congress that's willing to act on immigration reform. That means we need more than just the people in this room tonight. We're going to need some fresh faces under the Capitol Dome. It's going to take work on all of our parts. And I have faith, because over these last 8 years, every time I've fallen short, every time I've faced doubts or been taught a tough lesson or experienced a loss, what got me through has been you. You've picked me up. CHC has picked me up.

It's knowing that I've got allies like Linda and Rubén and Charlie and Nydia fighting tooth and nail on the Hill and back in your home States, even on tough votes. It's knowing that you're fostering the next generation of leaders, including more than 40 of your former fellows that have helped lead the way in my administration. It's knowing you're giving folks like Diego Quiñones a chance. Where's Diego? Is Diego here? There he is back there.

So, when Diego was 7 years old, Diego moved to Arkansas from Mexico with his parents. And his dad took a job repairing and building wooden pallets, which is a lot of hard work, calloused hands. A few years later, his dad opened up his own business. So Diego was waking up at 5 a.m. and loading and unloading pallets by hand, working every weekend through high school. And his family didn't have a lot of money, but they had belief, faith in America. Because as he says—and I'm quoting here—"If you come here and work hard, eventually, you will succeed."

And today, thanks to DACA, Diego's the first in his family to graduate from college. And now he's a fellow here at CHCI. And one day he hopes to go into government himself and make things better not just for Latino kids like him, but for every single person in the United States.

It's young people like that, that keep me going: folks who prove that immigrants aren't somehow changing the American character, immigrants are the American character. That's who we are. It's the DREAMers full of optimism. The moms and dads working long hours to give their kids a better shot. The entrepreneurs who came here to start new businesses and put Americans to work. And the teachers and the nurses and the lawyers who wake up at the crack of dawn to get ahead. And the folks who clean up after us. And the folks who care for our grandparents. The folks who are so proud of this country that they carry a pocket Constitution in their breast pocket.

That's the America I know. That's the America I believe in more strongly than ever. So thank you for picking me up every step of the way. Thank you for making this country great. We've got more work to do. But we will keep on making progress and create a brighter future for everybody in this country we love. *Si, se puede*. Thank you.

Thank you, CHCI. God bless you. God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:55 p.m. in Hall B at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham, in her capacity as first vice-chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus; former Gov. Sarah Palin of Alaska; Reps. Ruben Hinojosa and Nydia M. Velázquez; Jorge and Paula Quiñones, parents of Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute New York Life Public Policy Fellow Diego Quiñones; and former Rep. Charles A. Gonzalez, in his former capacity as chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Business, Government, and National Security Leaders To Discuss the Trans-Pacific Partnership and an Exchange With Reporters

September 16, 2016

The President. I am really pleased to be joined by this outstanding, bipartisan group to reemphasize how important it is for us to be out there and set the rules for the global economy.

As all of you know, I just returned from my 11th trip to Asia. This is the most populous, fastest growing part of the world. It is an area where we have the potential to sell American goods, promote American business, and help American workers, because we know that export industries tend to pay higher wages and are oftentimes some of the most successful companies in the world. And precisely because 95 percent of our markets are outside of the United States, and because for us to succeed in this increasingly integrated economy, we've got to make sure that we've got a level playing field and that American workers and American businesses are able to compete fairly.

What we've done over the last several years is negotiate what we call the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP, which is a high-standard trade agreement that makes other countries lower their tariff barriers so that there aren't taxes on U.S. goods that are sold there, that gets other countries to raise their labor standards so they're not undercutting U.S. workers, that gets other countries to raise environmental standards so that as we do our part to conserve the planet, other countries are doing their fair share. And after a lot of negotiations, we've got what is the most progressive, effective trade deal that we've ever seen.

And this bipartisan group made up of business leaders, mayors and Governors, Republicans and

Democrats, national security leaders and military leaders, the reason they're here is because they know this is important for our economy and they know that this is important for our national security and our standing in the world.

Right now China is pushing hard to create their own trading regime out in Asia. And I promise you that China is not going to be setting up a bunch of rules that are going to be to the advantage of American companies and American businesses. If we are not in there and making sure that fair trade is established in the Asia market, we're going to be cut out.

And I know that politics these days tends to look at trade as something that is negative. But if you talk to the farmers and the ranchers and the manufacturers and the service industries that are dependent on us selling American exports around the world, they will tell you we've got to get this done.

So I just want to say thank you to this outstanding group. We're going to spend some time strategizing about how we can get the message out. It's frustrating, I think sometimes, that there's so much misinformation floating around on this. But the good news is, is that people whose business it is to make sure that America has a strong position in the world and that our economy is improving understand that this needs to get done. We've got over a hundred mayors who signed up to make sure that this gets done. We've got Democratic and Republican Governors who are going to push to make sure that this gets done. We've got chambers of commerce and business leaders who are going to work really hard to make sure that people have the right information.

But if you're frustrated about rules of trade that disadvantage America, if you're frustrated about jobs being shipped overseas and other countries selling goods into our country freely when we can't sell our stuff into other countries freely, then you want to get this thing passed. You want to get this thing done.

And I thought it was important for people, even though we're in an election season, to know that this is not something I'm letting up on. I don't have any more elections to run, and the reason that I'm pushing this so hard is because I know and other countries know and China know that if we get this done, advantage America. And if we don't, then we're going to be disadvantaged for a long time to come.

And it's the right thing to do. And even if the politics of it sometimes are tough, we're going to keep on making sure that we position ourselves as well as we can to be able to compete not just next year or 5 years from now, but 20 and 30 years from now.

All right? Thank you very much, everybody.

The President's Birthplace/2016 Presidential Election

Q. Mr. President, Donald Trump is now finally acknowledging that, yes, you were born in America. Your reaction?

The President. I, Jonathan [Jonathan Karl, ABC News], have no reaction. And I'm shocked that a question like that would come up at a time when we've got so many other things to do. Well, I'm not that shocked, actually. [*Laughter*] It's fairly typical. We've got other business to attend to. I was pretty confident about where I was born. I think most people were as well. And my hope would be that the Presidential election reflects more serious issues than that.

All right? Thank you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:35 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Meeting participants included former Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg of New York City; Mayor Kasim Reed of Atlanta, GA; Gov. John R. Kasich of Ohio; Gov. John Bel Edwards of Louisiana; former Secretary of the Treasury Henry M. Paulson, Jr.; Virginia M. Rometty, president and chief executive officer, IBM; and former NATO Supreme Allied Commander Adm. James G. Stavridis, USN. A reporter referred to Republican Presidential nominee Donald J. Trump.

The President's Weekly Address
September 17, 2016

Hi, everybody. I've delivered a few hundred of these weekly addresses over the years, and you may have noticed a theme that pops up pretty often: The Republicans who run this Congress aren't doing their jobs. And guess what? Congress recently returned from a 7-week vacation, and they've only got 2 weeks left until their next one. But there's a lot of business they need to get done first.

First, even as we're seeing more and more Zika cases inside the United States, they've refused to fund our efforts to protect women and children by fighting Zika in a serious way.

Second, they still need to provide resources to help the people of Louisiana recover from last month's terrible floods and to help communities like Flint recover from their own challenges.

Third, they have made Merrick Garland, a Supreme Court nominee with more Federal judicial experience than any other in history, wait longer than any other in history for the simple courtesy of a hearing, let alone a vote, all because they want their nominee for President to fill that seat.

And there are plenty other bipartisan priorities they should finish this year as well: passing criminal justice reform; attacking the opioids epidemic; funding Joe Biden's Cancer Moonshot; finishing a transpacific trade agreement that will support American jobs and boost American wages; and passing a budget that will make sure all of America's priorities are funded without resorting to shutdown threats and last-minute gimmicks. And none of this list even includes some other big priorities that should get done. It's been almost a decade, for example, since Congress voted to raise the minimum wage.

None of these things should be controversial. All of it is within our reach. This is America; we can do anything. We just need a Congress that works as hard as you do. At the very least, we should expect that they should do their jobs and protect us from disease, help us recover from disaster, keep the Supreme Court above politics, and help our businesses grow and hire.

So, if any of these priorities matter to you, let your Congressperson know. And if they still refuse to do their jobs, well, you know what to do in November. Our Government only works as well as the people we elect. And that's entirely up to you.

Thanks, everybody, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 5:05 p.m. on September 16 in the Blue Room at the White House for broadcast on September 17. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 16, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on September 17. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Phoenix Awards Dinner
September 17, 2016

The President. Hello, CBC! Thank you, Don, for the great work you are doing and that kind introduction.

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you too.

I want to thank the CBC Foundation, Chairman Butterfield, members of the Congressional Black Caucus, and the whole CBC family. It's always good to be with the "Conscience of Congress." I also want to congratulate tonight's honorees, beginning with Charlie Rangel, a founding member of the CBC, an outstanding public servant who as we just talked about, we'll be riding off into the sunset together;

Representative Marcia Fudge; Robert Smith; the Mother Emanuel family; and your Trailblazer Award recipient, my friend, a champion for change, Secretary Hillary Clinton.

Now, there's an extra spring in my step tonight. I don't know about you guys, but I am so relieved that the whole birther thing is over. [*Laughter*] I mean, ISIL, North Korea, poverty, climate change—none of those things weighed on my mind—[*laughter*]—like the validity of my birth certificate. [*Laughter*] And to think that with just 124 days to go under the wire, we got that resolved. [*Laughter*] I mean, that's a boost for me in the home stretch. In other breaking news, the world is round, not flat. [*Laughter*] Lord.

This is, of course, my last CBC dinner as President. Next time I show up, I have to buy a ticket. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. No, you don't!

The President. Now, don't get me wrong though. We've still got so much work to do, and we're sprinting all the way through the tape. But the days are winding down. I've noticed that whenever Michelle or I travel around the country, folks come up and they say, oh, we're so sad to see you go. And I really appreciate that. And Michelle says, "That's right." [*Laughter*] She gave a speech yesterday. A bunch of young people were chanting "Four more years," and she said, no, no, no. [*Laughter*] She's ready. [*Laughter*]

But we do want to take this opportunity just to say thank you; to say thank you for your support over the years, to say thank you for your friendship, to say thank you for your prayers. I mean, as I just look across this auditorium, there are so many people here who lifted us up, who steadied us when things got tough.

When we began this journey coming on 10 years now, we said this was not about us. It wasn't about me. It wasn't about Michelle. It wasn't just to be a Black President or the President of Black America. We understood the power of the symbol. We know what it means for a generation of children, of all races, to see folks like us in the White House. And as Michelle says, we've tried to be role models, not just for our own girls, but for all children, because we know they watch everything we do as adults. They look to us as an example. So we've taken that responsibility seriously. And I've been so blessed to have a wife and a partner on this journey who makes it look so easy and is so strong and so honest and so beautiful and so smart. But we're all—we're just thankful because you guys have lifted us up every step of the way.

Now, we know, however, that what matters most for our community is not just the symbol, not just having an African American President. It's having a President who's going to do his or her darnedest to make the right decisions and fight the right fights. And think about the fights that we've waged together these past 8 years. Together, we fought our way back from the worst recession in 80 years: turned an economy that was in free fall, helped our businesses create more than 15 million new jobs. We declared that health care is not a privilege for a few, but a right for everybody; secured coverage for another 20 million Americans, including another three million African Americans. Our high school graduation rate is at an alltime high, including for African American students. More African Americans are graduating from college than ever before.

Together, we've begun to work on reforming our criminal justice system: reducing the Federal prison population, ending the use of solitary confinement for juveniles, banning the box for Federal employers, reinvigorating the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, pushing to make sure police and communities are working together to make sure that our streets are safe and that our law is applied equally. We're giving opportunities for kids so that they don't get in the criminal justice system in the first place. And I want to thank all of you who've helped us reach nearly 250 "My Brother Keepers" communities across the country.

And just this week, we learned that last year, across every race and age group in America, incomes rose, and poverty fell. Folks' typical household incomes rose by about $2,800, which is the fastest growth rate on record. Lifted 3.5 million people out of poverty, including

one million children, the largest 1-year drop in almost 50 years.

By so many measures, our country is stronger and more prosperous than it was 8 years ago. And none of it's been quick. None of it's been easy. None of it has come without a fight. And so much of our work remains unfinished. But then, we knew that we would not solve all of our challenges in one year or one term or even one Presidency, not even in one lifetime, because we understand better than anybody that this is the story of America, that the project of America is never finished. It is constantly a work in progress.

And what has always made us unique is our capacity to change: our conviction that change doesn't come from some ruler, but it comes from the bottom up, from us, from the actions we take, whether it's women seeking the right to vote, or a young John Lewis leading a mighty march in Selma. We do our part to slowly, steadily, make our Union a little bit more perfect. We know that. And that's what we've done these past 8 years. And now that's what we have to keep on doing.

You may have heard Hillary's opponent in this election say that there's never been a worse time to be a Black person. [*Laughter*] I mean, he missed that whole civics lesson about slavery and Jim Crow and—but we've got a museum for him to visit. So he can tune in. [*Laughter*] We will educate him. [*Laughter*]

He says we've got nothing left to lose, so we might as well support somebody who has fought against civil rights and fought against equality and who has shown no regard for working people for most of his life. [*Laughter*] Well, we do have challenges, but we're not stupid. We know the progress we've made, despite the forces of opposition, despite the forces of discrimination, despite the politics of backlash. And we intend to keep fighting against those forces.

When Governors refuse to expand Medicaid that hits the folks most in need, we'll fight.

Audience member. That's right!

The President. When folks block an increase to the minimum wage or refuse to expand paid family leave or won't guarantee equal pay for equal work that hurts the pocketbooks of every family and African American families, we will fight. When we're not investing in the schools that our kids deserve, when one group of Americans is treated differently under the law, when there are those who somehow think it's wrong to make sure that folks have access to affordable housing or are unwilling to do what it takes to make sure our veterans get the benefits that they've earned or aren't helping to sign folks up for health insurance, we will not stop our march for justice. We will not stop pushing for the security and prosperity of all people. That doesn't stop with my Presidency. We're just getting started.

And when people—when across this country in 2016, there are those who are still trying to deny people the right to vote——

Audience member. That's right!

The President. We've got to push back twice as hard. Right now, in multiple States, Republicans are actively and opening—openly trying to prevent people from voting: adding new barriers to registration, cutting early voting, closing polling places in predominantly minority communities, refusing to send out absentee ballots, kicking people off the rolls, often incorrectly.

This should be a national scandal. We are—we were supposed to have already won that fight. We're the only advanced democracy in the world that is actively discouraging people from voting.

Audience member. That's right!

Audience member. It's a shame!

The President. It's a shame. And then they try to justify it by telling folks that voter fraud is rampant. Between 2000 and 2012, there were 10 cases of voter impersonation nationwide. Ten. People don't get up and say, I'm going to impersonate somebody and go vote. [*Laughter*] They don't do that.

Meanwhile, some of the same folks who are trying to keep you from voting turn a blind eye when hundreds of thousands of people are killed by guns. Imposing voter ID restrictions so that a gun license can get you on the ballot, but a student ID can't—apparently more afraid of a ballot than a bullet.

Audience member. Come on!

The President. So no, our work is not done. But if we are going to advance the cause of justice and equality and of prosperity and freedom, then we also have to acknowledge that even if we eliminated every restriction on voting, we would still have one of the lowest voting rates among free peoples.

Audience member. That's not good!

The President. That's not good. [*Laughter*] That is on us.

And I am reminded of all those folks who had to count bubbles in a bar of soap, beaten trying to register voters in Mississippi, risked everything so that they could pull that lever. So, if I hear anybody saying their vote does not matter, that it doesn't matter who we elect, read up on your history. It matters. We've got to get people to vote.

In fact, if you want to give Michelle and me a good sendoff—and that was a beautiful video—but don't just watch us walk off into the sunset, now. Get people registered to vote. If you care about our legacy, realize everything we stand for is at stake. All the progress we've made is at stake in this election. My name may not be on the ballot, but our progress is on the ballot. Tolerance is on the ballot. Democracy is on the ballot. Justice is on the ballot. Good schools are on the ballot. Ending mass incarceration, that's on the ballot right now.

And there is one candidate who will advance those things. And there's another candidate whose defining principle, the central theme of his candidacy, is opposition to all that we've done.

Audience member. That's right!

Audience member. Preach!

The President. There's no such thing as a vote that doesn't matter. It all matters. And after we have achieved historic turnout in 2008 and 2012, especially in the African American community, I will consider it a personal insult, an insult to my legacy, if this community lets down its guard and fails to activate itself in this election. You want to give me a good sendoff? Go vote! And I'm going to be working as hard as I can these next 7 weeks to make sure folks do.

Hope is on the ballot, and fear is on the ballot too. Hope is on the ballot, and fear is on the ballot too.

A few days ago, Michelle and my mother-in-law and the girls and I, we snuck over and got an early look at the new Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. We looked at the shackles that had been used to bring folks over. We saw the shacks where slaves had been trying to make a way out of no way. And then, with each successive level, we saw the unimaginable courage and the struggles and the sacrifices and the humor and the innovation and the hope that led to such extraordinary progress, even in our own lifetimes.

And it made us proud. Not because we had arrived, but because what a road we've had to travel. What a miracle that despite such hardship, we've been able to do so much. And I know everybody in this room understands that that progress is not inevitable. Its sustainment depends on us. It's not just a matter of having a Black President or First Lady. It's a matter of engaging all of our citizens in the work of our democracy.

It was that slave who said, you know what, despite the risk of a lash, I'm going to learn how to read. It's Harriet Tubman saying, despite the risk to my life, I'm going to free my people. It's Fannie Lou Hamer saying, despite the ostracism, the blowback, I'm going to sit down here in this convention hall, and I'm going to tell people what it's like to live the life I've lived. I'm going to testify to why change needs to come.

Audience member. That's right!

The President. It's a young John Lewis saying, I'm going to march despite those horses I see in front of me.

All those ordinary people, all those folks whose names aren't in the history book, they never got a video providing a tribute to them—that's why we're here. That's how progress is sustained. And then it's a matter of electing people to office who understand that story, who feel it in their hearts, in their guts, and understand that government can't solve all our problems but it can be a force for good.

To experience this incredible new monument, this museum, is to be reminded we're just a small part of a long chain, generation after generation, striving against the odds. What an inspiration they are. And what an inspiration all of you are, especially the young people who are here.

That's why I'm still fired up. [*Laughter*] That's why I'm still ready to go. And if you are too, if you're ready to continue this journey that we started, then join me. Register folks to vote. Get them to the polls. Keep marching. Keep fighting. Keep organizing. If we rise to this moment, if we understand this isn't the endpoint, this is the beginning, we're just getting going, we're just getting moving, then I have never been more optimistic that our best days are still ahead.

Thank you for this incredible journey, CBC. God bless you. God bless this country that we love. We love you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:26 p.m. in Hall D at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to R. Donahue "Don" Peebles, chairman of the board of directors, Congressional Black Caucus Foundation; Rep. George K. Butterfield, Jr., in his capacity as chair of the Congressional Black Caucus; Robert F. Smith, founder, chairman, and chief executive officer, Vista Equity Partners; Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton; Republican Presidential nominee Donald J. Trump; and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. He also referred to his mother-in-law Marian Robinson.

Remarks at a Fundraiser for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in New York City
September 18, 2016

Well, it is good to see all of you. Thank you so much. Danny, Audrey, thank you for your amazing hospitality. I appreciate your wonderful kids being here as well, and I know that since one of mine just left—[*laughter*]—that any time they come back is a good day. [*Laughter*] So I'm glad I could come up with an excuse.

Irving Harris, for those of you who don't know, was an amazing businessman and helped to change the landscape of philanthropy in Chicago. His incredible wife and dear friend, Joan, is here with us. And it is absolutely true that Irving, I won't say discovered me, but was willing to, I think, put a bet on me very early on in my career at a time when I was just getting started in politics. And he was somebody who nobody said a bad word about, because he was an example of somebody who did well and did good and cared deeply about making sure that he was giving back.

And one of the main areas that he focused on was early childhood education and how meaningful it could be if we were able to give every child early in life the kind of support that they needed, that it would pay dividends for years to come. And not only did he give money, but he gave time, and he understood the subject matter, and he was passionate about it. And that passion was transferred to me and to a lot of other people in public service and in philanthropy. And so what a thrill it is to be able to be with his family all these years later and remember him. He was a great, great man. So we're really proud of him.

Now, to the matter at hand, there's an election coming up. [*Laughter*] And because this is an intimate group, I want to spend most of our time in conversation, but let me just say a few things at the top.

It is a cliche that every election is the most important election of our lifetime. This time it's true. [*Laughter*] They're all important, and I'm a big believer that the project of America, the project of democracy, is never finished; that it is a constant process of us together, reimagining what might be, figuring out how we can work together to make this country a little more just, a little more fair, a little more prosperous, a little more secure.

I've described myself as a relay runner in that process; that even when you achieve the highest office of the land, that no one person is going to bring about all the change that is necessary. You take the baton and you run, and you, hopefully, advance the causes that we all care deeply about a little bit, and then you pass it on to the next person. And what gives me great pride is, is that I can say, unequivocally, that we've run a good race and that we are much better off now than we were when I took office.

And that's true by almost every measure. When I came into office, we were losing 800,000 jobs a month. The financial system was frozen. We were looking at a global depression. And not only have we created 15 million new jobs, not only have we cut the unemployment by more—the unemployment rate by more than half, not only do we have 20 million people who have health insurance who didn't have it before, but just last week, the Census report came out that showed that last year we saw the largest increases in income since they've been measuring increases; the biggest drop in poverty since 1968. And what was most satisfying is that those increases in income were across the board and particularly among low-income and middle-income folks.

And so we are now in the process of reversing what had been a 20-, 30-year trend where the gains typically accrued to the top, and incomes and wages were stagnant for people in the middle and at the bottom.

Add to that, then, our doubling of clean energy; our historic efforts to stop the process of a warming planet; marriage equality is now the law of the land in all 50 States; the reopening of Cuba; the disarming of nuclear weapons in Iran; taking Usama bin Laden off the battlefield. It's very hard to find an area where we're not better off than we were. And that's a consequence of hard work, the incredible resilience of the American people, but also because of good policy: policy that's based on facts, policy that's based on evidence, a willingness to look squarely at what's not working and try something different and learn from mistakes.

And we now have one candidate in this race who is prepared to carry on that same type of governance. I have had the opportunity to work with Hillary Clinton. I've had the opportunity to run against Hillary Clinton. And I can tell you that this is somebody who is smart, who is tough, and most importantly, who cares deeply about making sure that this country works for everybody and not just a few. And she's displayed it again and again and again. And when I said that I think she is somebody who is as qualified as any individual who has ever run for this office, I meant it. Audrey mentioned "Hamilton" and being in the room where it happens. Well, she's been in the room where it happens, repeatedly. And her judgment has been unerring, and she has been disciplined, and she has been extraordinarily effective in every job that she's had.

And then there's the other guy. [*Laughter*] Now, you all know him because he's from New York. Some of you may have done business with him, I don't know. If you have, it doesn't sound like it's been a pleasant experience. [*Laughter*] But when I ran against John McCain, we had deep differences, but I couldn't say that he was not qualified to be President of the United States. When I ran against Mitt Romney, I had profound differences with him, but I couldn't say that electing Mitt Romney would be an unmitigated disaster.

This guy is not qualified to be President. And he shows no interest in even gaining the rudimentary knowledge required to make really hard decisions on a day-to-day basis. There's no curiosity. There's no desire to get up to speed. It's an infomercial. It's a reality show. And more disturbingly, it's tapping into some of our worst impulses as a country, ones that divide us rather than bring us together, ones that seek to put down people who have been historically vulnerable as opposed to lifting them up.

So this should not be a close election, but it will be. And the reason it will be is not because of Hillary's flaws, but rather because structurally, we've become a very polarized society. And if all you're doing is watching Fox News and listening to Rush Limbaugh and reading

some of the blogs that are churning out a lot of misinformation on a regular basis, then it's very hard for you to think that you're going to vote for somebody who you've been told is taking the country in the wrong direction. And so, structurally, we already have these divisions and it's going to be hard to overcome those.

I will also say that there's a reason why we haven't had a woman President: that we as a society still grapple with what it means to see powerful women. And it still troubles us in a lot of ways, unfairly, and that expresses itself in all sorts of ways.

So the good news is, despite all that, I have confidence in the American people that they're going to make a good decision, and we're going to win this thing. But it's not going to happen if we just take it for granted. It's not going to happen if we just step back and assume that we're going to be successful; we've got to work for it, as we've always had to work for it.

And that brings me back to where I started. Every step of the way, every piece of progress that we've made in this country has been because ordinary people decided we can imagine something better and then were willing to make extraordinary sacrifices and fight for it. That was true for the civil rights movement, that was true for the women's movement, that was true for the labor movement. And it will be true today.

So, if we do our jobs, if we don't get distracted and certainly if we don't get discouraged, if we are focused and disciplined and provide the resources and the time and the effort and the energy to get this thing done, then we're going to be successful. And I am absolutely confident that Hillary Clinton will be a great President. But it's going to require us to put her there. So let's get busy.

As I was coming over here, I may embarrass her, but I've got one of my staff—I won't mention her name. Her dad—she just was telling this story. She hadn't flown on Marine One before, and we were flying in together, and she started talking about her dad, who grew up in an orphanage. And it was an orphanage actually started by Alexander Hamilton's widow. And it's an amazing institution apparently, and he benefited from this loving environment for an orphan and then had the opportunity, which is part of what set America apart, to go to city colleges in New York at a time when this was a gateway, a pathway for working people to get a world-class education. And he ended up becoming a biochemist. And he had a successful career, and his daughter now works in the White House and is one of my closest advisers.

Just think about that. That's what America is at its best. That story, that trajectory. And probably somewhere for everybody in this room, there's a story like that. And the question is, does that story continue? And when you're making a decision about who should be President, and when you decide what's worth investing your time and your effort and your energy in—the way Irving Harris did—that's what we should be chasing. That's what we should be pursuing. That's what we should be trying to continue. That's what I've tried to do these last 8 years. I know that's what Hillary is going to be doing for the next 8 years.

Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:25 p.m. at the residence of Daniel H. Meyer and Audrey Heffernan Meyer. In his remarks, he referred to Hallie, Charles, Gretchen, and Peyton Meyer, children of Mr. and Mrs. Meyer; Joan White Harris, wife of the late philanthropist and businessman Irving B. Harris; Republican Presidential nominee Donald J. Trump; 2008 Republican Presidential nominee Sen. John S. McCain III; 2012 Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney; and radio show host Rush H. Limbaugh III. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on the Bombings in New York City and Seaside Park, New Jersey, From New York City

September 19, 2016

Good morning, everybody. I want to say a few words about the explosions that occurred here in New York City and New Jersey and the other device that have been found in New Jersey. I've been monitoring the situation closely and receiving frequent updates from my team. And I've just been briefed again by FBI Director Comey. In addition, I've had a chance to speak with Governors Cuomo and Christie, as well as Mayor de Blasio.

We've seen what was apparently a pipe bomb go off in New Jersey, in Seaside Park, where it could have seriously injured our U.S. marines and spectators who were there for a race. The bombing in the Chelsea neighborhood, here in New York, injured more than two dozen people. We are extremely fortunate and grateful that nobody was killed. And our prayers go out to all those who have been injured. We want to wish them a speedy recovery.

I especially want to commend all the outstanding police and first responders in both New York City and New Jersey for their extraordinary professionalism and their quick response, which surely prevented even more people from being hurt and ensured that people got assistance quickly.

Now, the investigation is moving rapidly, and as is my practice, I'm going to leave it to the FBI and law enforcement to provide details. I think everybody is aware at this point that there is a person of interest who is the focus of the investigation. And the FBI can give you further details in terms of how that is proceeding.

I told Governors Cuomo and Christie and Mayor de Blasio that they and their teams will continue to have all Federal support as they move ahead with their investigations, in tracking down every lead, and working to keep the people of this city and of this region safe. Law enforcement is asking for the help of the community. And so, to everybody in this region, I want to repeat what we've said before: If you see something suspicious, then you need to say something, contact local law enforcement.

In the meantime, I would ask that the press try to refrain from getting out ahead of the investigation. I am extraordinarily happy with the cooperation that's been taking place with—between the FBI and State and local law enforcement officials. They are moving smartly on this investigation. It does not help if false reports or incomplete information is out there. So try to, as much as possible, stick to what our investigators say, because they actually know what they're talking about.

Meanwhile, I know that the United Nations meetings here every year already create an additional workload for New York. But given the U.N. meetings, we also have a particularly high level of Federal resources here to help as needed. We're going to make sure that everybody is working together seamlessly, as one team, to get to the bottom of what happened, to find those responsible, and to make sure that justice is done.

Stabbings in St. Cloud, Minnesota

Meanwhile, while all this is going on in New York and New Jersey, we're also focused on the stabbing attack at the shopping mall in Minnesota. At this point, we see no connection between that incident and what happened here in New York and New Jersey. Our attention there is on the people who were injured. And again, we are very grateful that no one lost their life. Thanks to the quick action of a brave off-duty police officer, the suspect was killed, and we avoided more people being hurt.

I had a chance also to speak with Governor Dayton this morning. I assured him that we will provide all the assistance that he needs in the investigation. The FBI is investigating the Minnesota incident as a potential act of terrorism. We will direct the full resources of the Federal Government to make sure that the investigation goes forward aggressively.

U.S. Counterterrorism Efforts

And finally, I want to take this opportunity to reassure the people in this city, in this region, and Americans across our country that our counterterrorism and law enforcement professionals at every level—Federal, State, and local—are working together, around the clock, to prevent attacks and to keep us safe. They are the best of the best. Over the years, they have thwarted many plots and saved many lives. And we are incredibly grateful for their service, today and every single day.

We will continue to lead the global coalition in the fight to destroy ISIL, which is instigating a lot of people over the Internet to carry out attacks. We are going to continue to go after them. We're going to take out their leaders. We're going to take out their infrastructure. They are continuing to lose ground in Iraq and in Syria. And later today, I'll be meeting with Prime Minister Abadi of Iraq to discuss the need to sustain that momentum. As we take away more of their territory, it exposes ISIL as the failed cause that it is. And it helps to undermine their ideology, which over time will make it harder for them to recruit and inspire people to violence. And we're going to continue to enlist tech companies and community and religious leaders to push back against online extremist content and all messages of hate.

At moments like this, I think it's important to remember what terrorists and violent extremists are trying to do. They are trying to hurt innocent people, but they also want to inspire fear in all of us and disrupt the way we live, to undermine our values. And so, even as we have to be vigilant and aggressive, both in preventing senseless acts of violence, but also making sure that we find those who carry out such acts and bring them to justice, we all have a role to play as citizens in making sure that we don't succumb to that fear. And there's no better example of that than the people of New York and New Jersey.

When I was speaking to Governor Cuomo and Governor Christie and Mayor de Blasio, one point that they all made is, folks around here, they don't get scared. They're tough, they're resilient, they go about their business every single day. And that kind of toughness and resoluteness and a recognition that neither individuals nor organizations like ISIL can ultimately undermine our way of life, that's the kind of strength that makes me so proud to be an American. And that's the kind of strength that is going to be absolutely critical not just in the days to come, but in the years to come.

By showing those who want to do us harm that they will never beat us, by showing the entire world that as Americans we do not, and never will, give in to fear, that's going to be the most important ingredient in us defeating those who would carry our terrorist acts against us.

All right. Thank you very much, everybody. And as I said, you will be receiving, I'm sure, ongoing briefings from both the FBI and local law enforcement in terms of the details of the investigation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:23 a.m. at the Lotte New York Palace hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo of New York; Gov. Christopher J. Christie of New Jersey; Mayor Bill de Blasio of New York City; Ahmad Khan Rahami, suspect in the New York and New Jersey bombings of September 17; Ofc. Jason Falconer of the Avon, MN, Police Department; and Dahir Ahmed Adan, suspect in the stabbings at the Crossroads Center mall in St. Cloud, MN, on September 17. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi of Iraq in New York City

September 19, 2016

Bombings in New York City and Seaside Park, New Jersey/Stabbings in St. Cloud, Minnesota

President Obama. Let me begin by just commenting on the events that have unfolded today. This morning, I talked about the fact that there was a person of interest that the FBI and law enforcement had identified with respect to the bombs that had been planted in the New York and New Jersey area. As everybody is now aware, that individual has been apprehended.

And I just want to start by commenting on the extraordinary work and coordination that's taken place between the FBI and local law enforcement. For us to be able to apprehend a suspect in just a little over 24 hours after an event takes place like this, it is outstanding police work, outstanding law enforcement work.

I, in particular, want to give a heartfelt thanks to the New Jersey police officers who were able to apprehend this individual. I had a chance to talk to them briefly before I came down to my meetings here. They are going to be fine. They have sustained some modest injuries, but ones that they'll rapidly recover from. They were in good spirits. And I communicated to them how appreciative the American people were, as well as people in the region. It's just one more reminder of the extraordinary skill and sacrifice and courage of our law enforcement officers, and what they put on the line every single day to make sure that we are safe.

Beyond that, obviously information is still unfolding about what might have motivated the suspect. I'm going to leave it up to the FBI and local law enforcement authorities to discuss those details with you. I will also comment on the fact that in—with respect to the Minnesota stabbings that occurred, I had a chance to talk to the off-duty police officer there who undoubtedly saved a lot of lives and prevented further injury because of his quick and effective action. And I told him that, once again, the American people were appreciative of his work and his heroism.

Iraq-U.S. Relations

Now, one of the challenges that we face is—in addition to being an open society in which individuals who are disturbed in some fashion can carry out violence against the American people—the big danger we have right now is, is that we have an organization in ISIL that is actively trying to radicalize and promote extremism of this sort. In addition, they are directly carrying out and planning constant attacks not only overseas, but within Iraq and within Syria.

And so it is with great appreciation that I welcome Prime Minister Abadi here, along with his delegation. Thanks to the sacrifices of the Iraqi people and the Iraqi Armed Forces, since I last met with him face to face a year ago, we have made significant progress in rolling back ISIL. They have now lost over half of the populated territory that they had gained and were still maintaining as recently as last year. And what we've seen now is just steady progress as the Iraqi security forces have gained more confidence as they have coordinated with the 67-member coalition against ISIL.

And now, what we have been discussing and what we're focusing on is to go right at the heart of the ISIL operations in Mosul. Now, this is going to be a challenging battle. Mosul is a large city, and ISIL has embedded itself deeply within that city. But because of the prepositioning of forces, because of the cooperation between the coalition and the Iraqi security forces, because of the cooperation and courage of the Kurdish Peshmerga, we feel confident that we will be in a position to move forward fairly rapidly.

Now, it will be a tough fight. And once it is initiated, one of the things that we discussed is the importance of not just driving ISIL out of

Mosul, but making sure that the population there that invariably is going to be displaced and will have suffered, and is going to be looking for warmth and food and water and shelter, that we are prepared to help provide rapid humanitarian assistance, and that we can rebuild the city in a way that assures not only ISIL does not come back, but extremist ideologies born out of desperation do not return.

And so a lot of our work today is going—has been focused on making sure that that happens. I am very grateful that Prime Minister Abadi has consistently operated in a way that indicates his commitment to an inclusive Iraq that treats everybody fairly, respects human rights. And the work that we're doing with the Iraqi government will adhere to those principles, not just in the Mosul campaign, but beyond.

But this is going to be hard. This is going to be challenging and will require resources. We're going to be asking Congress to step up in support of this effort, and we're going to be asking other countries to step up in support of this effort.

And my thanks go out not only to the Iraqi forces that have borne the brunt of the progress that's been made inside of Iraq, as well as the Kurdish Peshmerga, but also, obviously, our outstanding men and women in uniform. Although they are not on the front lines of the fight and not are—not involved directly in combat, it's still a dangerous area to operate. And I think Prime Minister Abadi would be the first to say that our men and women from all branches of our Armed Forces have operated with incredible effectiveness and courage in providing the training and the assistance that has allowed us to make these gains.

So, hopefully, by the end of this year, we will have seen further progress with respect to Mosul, and that we will continue to see further progress with respect to economic and political stabilization inside of Iraq.

Mr. Prime Minister, thank you for your good work, and thank you to all the members of your team for the excellent work that they've done, as well.

Please.

Prime Minister Abadi. Thank you, Mr. President. I think Daesh is a huge threat, a terrorist threat to the whole world, not only for Iraq. Two years ago, we had been battling Daesh to protect Baghdad. Today, we are battling Daesh in the last stronghold in Mosul. And we hope within the next few months we're going to kick Daesh out of Mosul, and we'll deliver a huge blow to what Daesh believes in. This is very important to remove this terrorist organization and to crush it. It's a very dangerous organization. It has very dangerous ideology. It has very dangerous instruments and means of recruiting young people. It has a huge influence in the Internet and other social media. So they must be crushed on the ground, and our heroic fighters are doing that.

Of course, the support which has been given to Iraqis by the United States and other coalition partners is very important for us in terms of training, logistical support, providing air cover to our fighters on the ground, and of course preventing Daesh from having more recruits and more financial support. This is very important. I think our next challenge is how we stop these terrorists from recruiting other young people from all over the world. I think we have listed something like a hundred countries where these terrorists are coming from. Some of them are not probably disadvantaged; probably some of them are from middle class families, some of them from families who are well off. So I think this a huge challenge for all of us—how we can stamp out this terrorism, which is probably affecting the whole world, and not only for Iraq.

The damage in Iraq is huge due to Daesh. But the liberation of the areas, bringing refugees back to these liberated areas is a huge reward not only for these refugees, but for every one of us. This is my job, to bring all the Iraqis together, to treat all the Iraqis the same in Iraq. Now, we don't have first-class and second-class citizens in Iraq. All Iraqis are first-class citizens, regardless of their affiliation, regardless of their religion, regardless of their sect, regardless of their ethnic origin. We treat Iraqis the same. I hope everybody in Iraq will do the same.

There are huge challenges in Iraq. Daesh has caused a lot of damage in the relationship between communities. They have killed Yezidis, they have killed Shia, they have killed Christians, they have killed Sunnis, as well. So they have even caused divisions between the same tribe in the same area. So it's a huge task on our—I think, on our shoulder.

We believe in reconciliation. Mr. President, I called for national reconciliation in the day after liberation of Fallujah. And I still believe in reconciliation of the country. People have to live together. But, of course, those who have committed crimes, they have to be punished. But we have to be very careful in bringing the law. We have to follow the rule of law. And we're entitled to do that. And I think we have been managing well in the areas which we have liberated. There are excesses, which are unacceptable to us. And we are prepared, and we are very—we have the resolve to stamp them out. And we are doing this exactly.

Thank you very much for the support that was given to Iraq. And Iraq, of course, is fighting on the behalf of all the world to defeat Daesh, and we will do it soon. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:46 p.m. in the Holmes I room at the Lotte New York Palace hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Ahmad Khan Rahami, suspect in the New York and New Jersey bombings of September 17; Officers Peter Hammer and Angel Padilla of the Linden, NJ, Police Department; and Ofc. Jason Falconer of the Avon, MN, Police Department. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization, also known as Daesh.

Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly in New York City
September 20, 2016

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, fellow delegates, ladies and gentlemen: As I address this hall as President for the final time, let me recount the progress that we've made these last 8 years.

From the depths of the greatest financial crisis of our time, we coordinated our response to avoid further catastrophe and return the global economy to growth. We've taken away terrorist safe havens, strengthened the nonproliferation regime, resolved the Iranian nuclear issue through diplomacy. We opened relations with Cuba, helped Colombia and—end Latin America's longest war, and we welcome a democratically elected leader of Myanmar to this Assembly. Our assistance is helping people feed themselves, care for the sick, power communities across Africa, and promote models of development rather than dependence. And we have made international institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund more representative, while establishing a framework to protect our planet from the ravages of climate change.

This is important work. It has made a real difference in the lives of our people. And it could not have happened had we not worked together. And yet, around the globe, we are seeing the same forces of global integration that have made us interdependent also expose deep fault lines in the existing international order.

We see it in the headlines every day. Around the world, refugees flow across borders in flight from brutal conflict. Financial disruptions continue to weigh upon our workers and entire communities. Across vast swaths of the Middle East, basic security, basic order has broken down. We see too many governments muzzling journalists and quashing dissent and censoring the flow of information. Terrorist networks use social media to prey upon the minds of our youth, endangering open societies and spurring anger and—against innocent immigrants and Muslims. Powerful nations contest the constraints placed on them by international law.

And this is the paradox that defines our world today. A quarter century after the end of the cold war, the world is, by many measures, less violent and more prosperous than ever before, and yet our societies are filled with uncer-

tainty and unease and strife. Despite enormous progress, as people lose trust in institutions, governing becomes more difficult, and tensions between nations become more quick to surface.

And so I believe that at this moment we all face a choice. We can choose to press forward with a better model of cooperation and integration. Or we can retreat into a world sharply divided, and ultimately in conflict, along age-old lines of nation and tribe and race and religion.

I want to suggest to you today that we must go forward and not backward. I believe that as imperfect as they are, the principles of open markets and accountable governance, of democracy and human rights and international law that we have forged remain the firmest foundation for human progress in this century. Now, I make this argument not based on theory or ideology, but on facts, facts that all too often we forget in the immediacy of current events.

Here's the most important fact: The integration of our global economy has made life better for billions of men, women, and children. Over the last 25 years, the number of people living in extreme poverty has been cut from nearly 40 percent of humanity to under 10 percent. That's unprecedented. And it's not an abstraction. It means children have enough to eat, mothers don't die in childbirth.

Meanwhile, cracking the genetic code promises to cure diseases that have plagued us for centuries. The Internet can deliver the entirety of human knowledge to a young girl in a remote village on a single hand-held device. In medicine and in manufacturing, in education and communications, we're experiencing a transformation of how human beings live on a scale that recalls the revolutions in agriculture and industry. And as a result, a person born today is more likely to be healthy, to live longer, and to have access to opportunity than at any time in human history.

Moreover, the collapse of colonialism and communism has allowed more people than ever before to live with the freedom to choose their leaders. Despite the real and troubling areas where freedom appears in retreat, the fact remains that the number of democracies around the world has nearly doubled in the last 25 years.

In remote corners of the world, citizens are demanding respect for the dignity of all people, no matter their gender or race or religion or disability or sexual orientation, and those who deny others dignity are subject to public reproach. An explosion of social media has given ordinary people more ways to express themselves and has raised people's expectations for those of us in power. Indeed, our international order has been so successful that we take it as a given that great powers no longer fight world wars; that the end of the cold war lifted the shadow of nuclear Armageddon; that the battlefields of Europe have been replaced by peaceful union; that China and India remain on a path of remarkable growth.

I say all this not to whitewash the challenges we face or to suggest complacency. Rather, I believe that we need to acknowledge these achievements in order to summon the confidence to carry this progress forward and to make sure that we do not abandon those very things that have delivered this progress.

In order to move forward, though, we do have to acknowledge that the existing path to global integration requires a course correction. Because too often, those trumpeting the benefits of globalization have ignored inequality within and among nations; have ignored the enduring appeal of ethnic and sectarian identities; have left international institutions ill-equipped, underfunded, underresourced in order to handle transnational challenges.

And as these real problems have been neglected, alternative visions of the world have pressed forward both in the wealthiest countries and in the poorest: religious fundamentalism, the politics of ethnicity or tribe or sect, aggressive nationalism, a crude populism—sometimes from the far left, but more often from the far right—which seeks to restore what they believe was a better, simpler age, free of outside contamination.

We cannot dismiss these visions. They are powerful. They reflect dissatisfaction among

too many of our citizens. I do not believe those visions can deliver security or prosperity over the long term, but I do believe that these visions fail to recognize, at a very basic level, our common humanity. Moreover, I believe that the acceleration of travel and technology and telecommunications, together with a global economy that depends on a global supply chains, makes it self-defeating ultimately for those who seek to reverse this progress. Today, a nation ringed by walls would only imprison itself.

So the answer cannot be a simple rejection of global integration. Instead, we must work together to make sure the benefits of such integration are broadly shared and that the disruptions—economic, political, and cultural—that are caused by integration are squarely addressed. Now, this is not the place for a detailed policy blueprint, but let me offer in broad strokes those areas where I believe we must do better together.

It starts with making the global economy work better for all people and not just for those at the top. While open markets, capitalism have raised standards of living around the globe, globalization, combined with rapid progress and technology, has also weakened the position of workers and their ability to secure a decent wage. In advanced economies like my own, unions have been undermined, and many manufacturing jobs have disappeared. Often, those who benefit most from globalization have used their political power to further undermine the position of workers.

In developing countries, labor organizations have often been suppressed, and the growth of the middle class has been held back by corruption and underinvestment. Mercantilist policies pursued by governments with export-driven models threaten to undermine the consensus that underpins global trade. And meanwhile, global capital is too often unaccountable: nearly $8 trillion stashed away in tax havens and a shadow banking system that grows beyond the reach of effective oversight.

A world in which 1 percent of humanity controls as much wealth as the other 99 percent will never be stable. I understand that the gaps between rich and poor are not new, but just as the child in a slum today can see the skyscraper nearby, technology now allows any person with a smartphone to see how the most privileged among us live and the contrast between their own lives and others. Expectations rise, then, faster than governments can deliver, and a pervasive sense of injustice undermine people's faith in the system.

So how do we fix this imbalance? We cannot unwind integration any more than we can stuff technology back into a box. Nor can we look to failed models of the past. If we start resorting to trade wars, market-distorting subsidies, beggar-thy-neighbor policies, an overreliance on natural resources instead of innovation, these approaches will make us poorer, collectively, and they are more likely to lead to conflict. And the stark contrast between, say, the success of the Republic of Korea and the wasteland of North Korea shows that central, planned control of the economy is a dead end.

But I do believe there's another path, one that fuels growth and innovation and offers the clearest route to individual opportunity and national success. It does not require succumbing to a soulless capitalism that benefits only the few, but rather recognizes that economies are more successful when we close the gap between rich and poor and growth is broadly based. And that means respecting the rights of workers so they can organize into independent unions and earn a living wage. It means investing in our people: their skills, their education, their capacity to take an idea and turn it into a business. It means strengthening the safety net that protects our people from hardship and allows them to take more risks, to look for a new job or start a new venture.

These are the policies that I've pursued here in the United States, and with clear results. American businesses have created now 15 million new jobs. After the recession, the top 1 percent of Americans were capturing more than 90 percent of income growth. But today, that's down to about half. Last year, poverty in this country fell at the fastest rate in nearly 50 years. And with further investment in infrastructure and early childhood education and

basic research, I'm confident that such progress will continue.

So, just as I've pursued these measures here at home, so has the United States worked with many nations to curb the excesses of capitalism; not to punish wealth, but to prevent repeated crises that can destroy it. That's why we've worked with other nations to create higher and clearer standards for banking and taxation, because a society that asks less of oligarchs than ordinary citizens will rot from within. That's why we've pushed for transparency and cooperation in rooting out corruption and tracking illicit dollars, because markets create more jobs when they're fueled by hard work and not the capacity to extort a bribe. That's why we've worked to reach trade agreements that raise labor standards and raise environmental standards, as we've done with the Trans-Pacific Partnership, so that the benefits are more broadly shared.

And just as we benefit by combating inequality within our countries, I believe advanced economies still need to do more to close the gap between rich and poor nations around the globe. This is difficult politically. It's difficult to spend on foreign assistance. But I do not believe this is charity. For the small fraction of what we spent at war in Iraq, we could support institutions so that fragile states don't collapse in the first place and invest in emerging economies that become markets for our goods. It's not just the right thing to do, it's the smart thing to do.

And that's why we need to follow through on our efforts to combat climate change. If we don't act boldly, the bill that could come due will be mass migrations and cities submerged and nations displaced and food supplies decimated and conflicts born of despair. The Paris Agreement gives us a framework to act, but only if we scale up our ambition. And there must be a sense of urgency about bringing the agreement into force and helping poorer countries leapfrog destructive forms of energy.

So, for the wealthiest countries, a Green Climate Fund should only be the beginning. We need to invest in research and provide market incentives to develop new technologies and then make these technologies accessible and affordable for poorer countries. And only then can we continue lifting all people up from poverty without condemning our children to a planet beyond their capacity to repair.

So we need new models for the global marketplace, models that are inclusive and sustainable. And in the same way, we need models of governance that are inclusive and accountable to ordinary people.

I recognize not every country in this hall is going to follow the same model of governance. I do not think that America can or should impose our system of government on other countries. But there appears to be a growing contest between authoritarianism and liberalism right now. And I want everybody to understand, I am not neutral in that contest. I believe in a liberal political order: an order built not just through elections and representative government, but also through respect for human rights and civil society and independent judiciaries and the rule of law.

I know that some countries, which now recognize the power of free markets, still reject the model of free societies. And perhaps those of us who have been promoting democracy feel somewhat discouraged since the end of the cold war, because we've learned that liberal democracy will not just wash across the globe in a single wave. It turns out, building accountable institutions is hard work, the work of generations. The gains are often fragile. Sometimes, we take one step forward and then two steps back. In countries held together by borders drawn by colonial powers, with ethnic enclaves and tribal divisions, politics and elections can sometimes appear to be a zero-sum game. And so, given the difficulty in forging true democracy in the face of these pressures, it's no surprise that some argue, the future favors the strongman, a top-down model, rather than strong, democratic institutions.

But I believe this thinking is wrong. I believe the road of true democracy remains the better path. I believe that in the 21st-century, economies can only grow to a certain point until they need to open up, because entrepreneurs need to access information in order to

invent; young people need a global education in order to thrive; independent media needs to check the abuses of power. Without this evolution, ultimately, expectations of people will not be met; suppression and stagnation will set in. And history shows that strongmen are then left with two paths: permanent crackdown, which sparks strife at home; or scapegoating enemies abroad, which can lead to war.

Now, I will admit, my belief that governments serve the individual, and not the other way around, is shaped by America's story. Our Nation began with a promise of freedom that applied only to the few. But because of our democratic Constitution, because of our Bill of Rights, because of our ideals, ordinary people were able to organize and march and protest, and ultimately, those ideals won out, opened doors for women and minorities and workers in ways that made our economy more productive and turned our diversity into a strength; that gave innovators the chance to transform every area of human endeavor; that made it possible for someone like me to be elected President of the United States.

So yes, my views are shaped by the specific experiences of America, but I do not think this story is unique to America. Look at the transformation that's taken place in countries as different as Japan and Chile, Indonesia, Botswana. The countries that have succeeded are ones in which people feel they have a stake.

In Europe, the progress of those countries in the former Soviet bloc that embraced democracy stand in clear contrast to those that did not. After all, the people of Ukraine did not take to the streets because of some plot imposed from abroad. They took to the streets because their leadership was for sale and they have no recourse. They demanded change because they saw life get better for people in the Baltics and in Poland, societies that were more liberal and democratic and open than their own.

So those of us who believe in democracy, we need to speak out forcefully, because both the facts and history, I believe, are on our side. That doesn't mean democracies are without flaws. It does mean that the cure for what ails our democracies is greater engagement by our citizens, not less.

Yes, in America, there is too much money in politics, too much entrenched partisanship, too little participation by citizens, in part because of a patchwork of laws that makes it harder to vote. In Europe, a well-intentioned Brussels often became too isolated from the normal push and pull of national politics. Too often, in capitals, decisionmakers have forgotten that democracy needs to be driven by civic engagement from the bottom up, not governance by experts from the top down. And so these are real problems, and as leaders of democratic governments make the case for democracy abroad, we'd better strive harder to set a better example at home.

Moreover, every country will organize its government informed by centuries of history and the circumstances of geography and the deeply held beliefs of its people. So I recognize a traditional society may value unity and cohesion more than a diverse country like my own, which was founded upon what, at the time, was a radical idea: the idea of the liberty of individual human beings endowed with certain God-given rights. But that does not mean that ordinary people in Asia or Africa or the Middle East somehow prefer arbitrary rule that denies them a voice in the decisions that can shape their lives. I believe that spirit is universal. And if any of you doubt the universality of that desire, listen to the voices of young people everywhere who call out for freedom and dignity and the opportunity to control their own lives.

This leads me to the third thing we need to do: We must reject any forms of fundamentalism or racism or a belief in ethnic superiority that makes our traditional identities irreconcilable with modernity. Instead, we need to embrace the tolerance that results from respect of all human beings.

It's a truism that global integration has led to a collision of cultures. Trade, migration, the Internet—all these things can challenge and unsettle our most cherished identities. We see liberal societies express opposition when women choose to cover themselves. We see protests responding to Western newspaper cartoons

that caricature the Prophet Muhammad. In a world that let—that left the age of empire behind, we see Russia attempting to recover lost glory through force. Asian powers debate competing claims of history. And in Europe and the United States, you see people wrestle with concerns about immigration and changing demographics and suggesting that somehow people who look different are corrupting the character of our countries.

Now, there's no easy answer for resolving all these social forces, and we must respect the meaning that people draw from their own traditions: from their religion, from their ethnicity, from their sense of nationhood. But I do not believe progress is possible if our desire to preserve our identities gives way to an impulse to dehumanize or dominate another group. If our religion leads us to persecute those of another faith, if we jail or beat people who are gay, if our traditions lead us to prevent girls from going to school, if we discriminate on the basis of race or tribe or ethnicity, then the fragile bonds of civilization will fray. The world is too small, we are too packed together, for us to be able to resort to those old ways of thinking.

We see this mindset in too many parts of the Middle East. There, so much of the collapse in order has been fueled because leaders sought legitimacy, not because of policies or programs, but by resorting to persecuting political opposition or demonizing other religious sects; by narrowing the public space to the mosque, where in too many places perversions of a great faith were tolerated. And these forces built up for years and are now at work helping to fuel both Syria's tragic civil war and the mindless, medieval menace of ISIL.

The mindset of sectarianism and extremism and bloodletting and retribution that has been taking place will not be quickly reversed. And if we are honest, we understand that no external power is going to be able to force different religious communities or ethnic communities to coexist for long. But I do believe we have to be honest about the nature of these conflicts, and our international community must continue to work with those who seek to build rather than to destroy.

And there is a military component to that. It means being united and relentless in destroying networks like ISIL, which show no respect for human life. But it also means that in a place like Syria, where there's no ultimate military victory to be won, we're going to have to pursue the hard work of diplomacy that aims to stop the violence and deliver aid to those in need and support those who pursue a political settlement and can see those who are not like themselves as worthy of dignity and respect.

Across the region's conflicts, we have to insist that all parties recognize a common humanity and that nations end proxy wars that fuel disorder. Because until basic questions are answered about how communities coexist, the embers of extremism will continue to burn, countless human beings will suffer—most of all in that region—but extremism will continue to be exported overseas. And the world is too small for us to simply be able to build a wall and prevent it from affecting our own societies.

And what is true in the Middle East is true for all of us. Surely, religious traditions can be honored and upheld while teaching young people science and math, rather than intolerance. Surely, we can sustain our unique traditions while giving women their full and rightful role in the politics and economics of a nation. Surely, we can rally our nations to solidarity while recognizing equal treatment for all communities, whether it's a religious minority in Myanmar or an ethnic minority in Burundi or a racial minority right here in the United States. And surely, Israelis and Palestinians will be better off if Palestinians reject incitement and recognize the legitimacy of Israel, but Israel recognizes that it cannot permanently occupy and settle Palestinian land. We all have to do better as leaders in tamping down, rather than encouraging, a notion of identity that leads us to diminish others.

And this leads me to the fourth and final thing we need to do, and that is sustain our commitment to international cooperation rooted in the rights and responsibilities of nations.

As President of the United States, I know that for most of human history, power has not been unipolar. And the end of the cold war

may have led too many to forget this truth. I've noticed as President that at times, both America's adversaries and some of our allies believe that all problems were either caused by Washington or could be solved by Washington. [*Laughter*] And perhaps too many in Washington believe that as well. [*Laughter*] But I believe America has been a rare superpower in human history insofar as it has been willing to think beyond narrow self-interest; that while we've made our share of mistakes over these last 25 years—and I've acknowledged some—we have strived, sometimes at great sacrifice, to align better our actions with our ideals. And as a consequence, I believe we have been a force for good.

We have secured allies. We've acted to protect the vulnerable. We've supported human rights and welcomed scrutiny of our own actions. We've bound our power to international laws and institutions. When we've made mistakes, we've tried to acknowledge them. We have worked to roll back poverty and hunger and disease beyond our borders, not just within our borders.

I'm proud of that. But I also know that we can't do this alone. And I believe that if we're to meet the challenges of this century, we are all going to have to do more to build up international capacity. We cannot escape the prospect of nuclear war unless we all commit to stopping the spread of nuclear weapons and pursuing a world without them.

When Iran agrees to accept constraints on its nuclear program, that enhances global security and enhances Iran's ability to work with other nations. On the other hand, when North Korea tests a bomb, that endangers all of us. And any country that breaks this basic bargain must face consequences. And those nations with these weapons, like the United States, have a unique responsibility to pursue the path of reducing our stockpiles and reaffirming basic norms like the commitment to never test them again.

We can't combat a disease like Zika that recognizes no borders—mosquitos don't respect walls—[*laughter*]—unless we make permanent the same urgency that we brought to bear against Ebola: by strengthening our own systems of public health, by investing in cures and rolling back the root causes of disease, and helping poorer countries develop a public health infrastructure.

We can only eliminate extreme poverty if the sustainable development goals that we have set are more than words on paper. Human ingenuity now gives us the capacity to feed the hungry and give all of our children, including our girls, the education that is the foundation for opportunity in our world. But we have to put our money where our mouths are.

And we can only realize the promise of this institution's founding—to replace the ravages of war with cooperation—if powerful nations like my own accept constraints. Sometimes, I'm criticized in my own country for professing a belief in international norms and multilateral institutions. But I am convinced that in the long run, giving up some freedom of action—not giving up our ability to protect ourselves or pursue our core interests, but binding ourselves to international rules over the long term—enhances our security. And I think that's not just true for us.

If Russia continues to interfere in the affairs of its neighbors, it may be popular at home, it may fuel nationalist fervor for a time, but over time, it is also going to diminish its stature and make its borders less secure. In the South China Sea, a peaceful resolution of disputes offered by law will mean far greater stability than the militarization of a few rocks and reefs.

We are all stakeholders in this international system, and it calls upon all of us to invest in the success of institutions to which we belong. And the good news is, is that many nations have shown what kind of progress is possible when we make those commitments. Consider what we've accomplished here over the past few years.

Together, we mobilized some 50,000 additional troops for U.N. peacekeeping, making them nimble, better equipped, better prepared to deal with emergencies. Together, we established an Open Government Partnership so that, increasingly, transparency empowers

more and more people around the globe. And together, now we have to open our hearts and do more to help refugees who are desperate for a home.

We should all welcome the pledges of increased assistance that have been made at this General Assembly gathering. I'll be discussing that more this afternoon. But we have to follow through, even when the politics are hard. Because in the eyes of innocent men and women and children who, through no fault of their own, have had to flee everything that they know, everything that they love, we have to have the empathy to see ourselves. We have to imagine what it would be like for our family, for our children, if the unspeakable happened to us. And we should all understand that, ultimately, our world will be more secure if we are prepared to help those in need and the nations who are carrying the largest burden with respect to accommodating these refugees.

There are a lot of nations right now that are doing the right thing, but many nations—particularly those blessed with wealth and the benefits of geography—that can do more to offer a hand, even if they also insist that refugees who come to our countries have to do more to adopt to the customs and conventions of the communities that are now providing them a home.

Let me conclude by saying that I recognize history tells a different story than the one that I've talked about here today. There's a much darker and more cynical view of history that we can adopt. Human beings are too often motivated by greed and by power. Big countries, for most of history, have pushed smaller ones around. Tribes and ethnic groups and nation-states have very often found it most convenient to define themselves by what they hate and not just those ideas that bind them together.

Time and again, human beings have believed that they finally arrived at a period of enlightenment only to repeat, then, cycles of conflict and suffering. Perhaps that's our fate. We have to remember that the choices of individual human beings led to repeated world war. But we also have to remember that the choices of individual human beings created a United Nations so that a war like that would never happen again. Each of us as leaders, each nation can choose to reject those who appeal to our worst impulses and embrace those who appeal to our best. For we have shown that we can choose a better history.

Sitting in a prison cell, a young Martin Luther King, Jr., wrote that "Human progress never rolls on the wheels of inevitability; it comes through the tireless efforts of men willing to be coworkers with God." And during the course of these 8 years, as I've traveled to many of your nations, I have seen that spirit in our young people, who are more educated and more tolerant and more inclusive and more diverse and more creative than our generation; who are more empathetic and compassionate towards their fellow human beings than previous generations. And yes, some of that comes with the idealism of youth. But it also comes with young people's access to information about other peoples and places, an understanding unique in human history that their future is bound with the fates of other human beings on the other side of the world.

I think of the thousands of health care workers from around the world who volunteered to fight Ebola. I remember the young entrepreneurs I met who are now starting new businesses in Cuba; the parliamentarians who used to be, just a few years ago, political prisoners in Myanmar. I think of the girls who have braved taunts or violence just to go to school in Afghanistan and the university students who started programs online to reject the extremism of organizations like ISIL. I draw strength from the young Americans—entrepreneurs, activists, soldiers, new citizens—who are remaking our Nation once again, who are unconstrained by old habits and old conventions and unencumbered by what is, but are instead ready to seize what ought to be.

My own family is a made up of the flesh and blood and traditions and cultures and faiths from a lot of different parts of the world, just as America has been built by immigrants from every shore. And in my own life, in this country and as President, I have learned that our identities do not have to be defined by putting

someone else down, but can be enhanced by lifting somebody else up; that they don't have to be defined in opposition to others, but rather by a belief in liberty and equality and justice and fairness.

And the embrace of these principles as universal doesn't weaken my particular pride, my particular love for America, it strengthens it. My belief that these ideals apply everywhere doesn't lessen my commitment to help those who look like me or pray as I do or pledge allegiance to my flag. But my faith in those principles does force me to expand my moral imagination and to recognize that I can best serve my own people, I can best look after my own daughters, by making sure that my actions seek what is right for all people and all children and your daughters and your sons.

This is what I believe: that all of us can be coworkers with God. And our leadership and our governments and this United Nations should reflect this irreducible truth.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:29 a.m. at United Nations Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to Peter Thomson, President, 71st Session of the U.N. General Assembly; and State Counselor Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President Muhammadu Buhari of Nigeria in New York City
September 20, 2016

President Obama. It's a great pleasure to once again meet with President Buhari of Nigeria, along with his delegation. Nigeria is one of the largest, most populous, and most important countries not just in sub-Saharan Africa, but in the world. And I am very pleased that we have been able to build a very strong working relationship with President Buhari as he's come in and initiated some very bold efforts at reform.

On the security front, real progress has been made in coordinating regionally to restrict Boko Haram, a brutal organization affiliated with ISIL that has killed an enormous number of people and have decimated communities there. Because of President Buhari's leadership, he has been able to refocus the Nigerian military. We are coordinating carefully. And we discussed here today additional ways that we can make further progress not only in destroying this branch of ISIL, but also to make sure that the people in this region are able to recover from the devastation of Boko Haram's occupation.

That includes making sure that humanitarian is—aid is getting in. There is real danger of famine and hardship in these areas because farmers were not able to grow crops and engage in traditional agricultural practices. And so we had a discussion about how we can work together to ensure an international response and then move forward to help these communities rebuild.

We also had a discussion about how, during a difficult time for Nigeria given its role as an oil exporter, we are looking to help in any ways that we can to facilitate a reduction of conflict in the Niger Delta region, a major oil-producing region, but one that has been marred by a number of militant organizations that have expropriated or siphoned off oil revenues. And the President, I think, wisely, is heading up a delegation to bring various stakeholders together and try to make progress on that front. We want to be helpful in any way that we can.

We discussed broader issues of development. And the President is taking some very bold economic reforms, including allowing for flexibility in exchange rates, refocusing on agricultural production. And we pledged to offer all the assistance that we can in those areas.

And as the President is trying to stamp out corruption, to recover external funds that may have been illegally obtained and are sitting in

bank accounts around the world, as he continues to work to make sure that the security forces inside of Nigeria are abiding by professional and human rights standards, what we've pledged is, is that we will partner in any ways that we can to be helpful.

And in the meantime, I also want to thank the President for having been a great partner with us on a range of international challenges of great importance, including around issues like climate change and dealing with pollutants like hydrofluorocarbons, where Nigeria has actually been an excellent partner.

So we wish President Buhari well. He's going to be President longer than I am. [*Laughter*] But that gives us a sense of urgency to make sure that we've done everything we can to put in place the framework for cooperation and partnership for many years to come.

Mr. President.

President Buhari. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

We have—when I say we, I mean Nigeria—benefited tremendously from the United States understanding and cooperation and backing politically and security-wise. Politically, after 16 years and 8 successive government of the other party, it is the United States and Europe that made it absolutely clear that elections should be held according to Nigerian Constitution. That really stabilized the polity in Nigeria and help changing in Government.

And when we came back, a major problem we identified and we mentioned during our campaign is about security, economy, and corruption. And in each of the three identified objectives, the United States help us: training our military, helping with hard- and software. That's why we are very successful in the northeast, where Boko Haram was holding clearly 14 out of 770—[*inaudible*]—and they declared a caliphate. Now they are not holding a single one, and they are reduced to—what do you call—using improvised explosive devices and attacking soft targets. And then the training team we received from the United States and the hard- and software help has helped to stabilize it. And in the south, the militants there, we are being helped again with intelligence and advice and training, and we believe soon it will be okay.

Developing the economy, we made the mistake of being a monoeconomy. Until now, we find out footing the bills on food importation will be difficult. So we want into agriculture. We are very grateful for the advice we have been receiving.

So I don't think Nigeria can thank the United States enough, in terms of helping us in the security and the economy. So we are really very grateful, Mr. President. Thank you very much.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Geoffrey Onyeama of Nigeria. And you wish him well in his retirement.

President Buhari. And I wish you a peaceful retirement. [*Laughter*]

President Obama. Thank you so much. Appreciate it, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:09 p.m. in Conference Room C at United Nations Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Remarks at a Luncheon Hosted by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of the United Nations in New York City
September 20, 2016

Well, good afternoon, everyone. And thank you, Mr. Secretary-General, as always, for your kind words and your welcome. For 8 years, this luncheon has followed a long speech by me. For 8 years, it's forced me to be brief and not subject you to a second long speech. And after 8 years, I finally figured out the Secretary-General's plan. It keeps me brief to—and I will follow that plan here today.

My role is very simple. As President of the host country of the United Nations, it is my pleasure to welcome each and every one of you. The presence of so many world leaders in one place is always an enormous undertaking. New York City always rises to the occasion. And over the last few days, this city has been tested again. And on behalf of all of us, I want to salute our police officers, our law enforcement officials, our first responders for hosting us, but also showing the world the true meaning of grit and resolve. So thank you again, New York City and the New York-New Jersey area.

As I said earlier today, even as we work to uphold our international system, it is the choices of individuals that decides whether our world is defined by confrontation or cooperation. And so, again, today I want to pay special tribute to those individuals who devote their lives to sustaining the system: the men and women who staff the United Nations and its organizations, those in Syria and elsewhere who risk their lives to deliver aid to people in dire need, those who give their lives as peacekeepers. The entire world is in their debt.

And I would note, just as this morning was my last speech to the General Assembly as President, this will be my last toast at this luncheon. It will be the Secretary-General's as well. So I want to take this opportunity on behalf of all of us to say thank you, Mr. Secretary-General, for your outstanding leadership of this institution and the example of your life. You've traveled a remarkable journey: born in a village in South Korea, rising to the highest levels of global leadership. And it is a testimony to your courage and your optimism, your imagination and your will.

We see your legacy in the new sustainable development goals, your courageous defense of human rights, a reinvigorated peacekeeping structure, and the most ambitious agreement in history to fight climate change.

I should point out, we're not the only ones who are grateful for the Secretary General's leadership. A village on the island of Samoa declared him officially a crown chief and prince—[*laughter*]—which I believe is a title that you can keep for life. There's no term limit to that. [*Laughter*]

So let me propose a toast: To the eighth Secretary-General of the United Nations, who in his seventh decade still embodies what Robert Kennedy famously called the "qualities of youth; not a time of life, but a state of mind, a temper of the will, a quality of the imagination, and a predominance of courage over timidity." That aptly describes our Secretary-General. We are grateful for his service. We are grateful to his team. The world is better for him. Cheers.

[*At this point, President Obama offered a toast.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:42 p.m. in the North Delegates' Lounge at United Nations Headquarters.

Remarks at a Roundtable Discussion on Refugees With Business Leaders in New York City
September 20, 2016

As I discussed in my speech earlier today before the General Assembly, our international system is facing a number of challenges, none of which can be solved by a single country. And for that matter, none of which can be solved solely by governments. Obviously, we expect governments to take the lead on major transnational challenges, but for us to be able to mobilize the private sector, NGOs, and others is absolutely vital to maximize our impact.

And that's why we're convening today a summit of 50 nations to make new commitments to address a growing refugee crisis, not just in Europe, which has received the most attention, but around the world. And what we have represented here is the results of what we launched—what we call "A Call to Action"—to

encourage companies to contribute not just money but their unique expertise. And as you can see, some extraordinary companies and individuals have answered the call.

I want to thank Secretary Penny Pritzker, Ambassador Power, and my national senior—my Senior Adviser, Valerie Jarrett, for bringing these leaders together here today. I'm pleased to announce that 50 companies, large and small, have stepped up and committed more than $650 million, including in-kind contributions that are all designed to help empower more than 6.3 million refugees across more than 20 countries.

Microsoft, TripAdvisor, HP, Google, something called the Clooney Foundation for Justice—I don't know what that is—[*laughter*]—among others. They're going to help children get an education, including in refugee camps: all together, educational opportunities for more than 80,000 refugees. You have companies like Accenture, Western Union, and LinkedIn that are going to help with internships, skills training and job placement. Newton Supply Company, a small business in Texas that makes handbags, is going to make 90 percent of their bags with local refugees.

So today's commitment means that we're going to be creating employment opportunities for more than 220,000 refugees.

Meanwhile, companies like Micro—MasterCard, Johnson & Johnson, Goldman Sachs, and Airbnb are going to help refugees become more self-sufficient by getting online, accessing aid, finding housing, health care, and financial services. And the private sector is also driving change through investment. For example, George Soros and the Soros Fund Management is making an extraordinary investment of up to $500 million in companies that come up with sustainable long-term solutions to help refugees.

So, for these companies to put themselves out there on behalf of the most vulnerable citizens in the world is not just an extraordinary gesture of compassion, but I think it's also a recognition that, for those of us who benefit from this increasingly integrated global society, we can only sustain what we do to the extent that we're making sure that the least of these, the most vulnerable among us, also have hope, also have opportunity.

And as a consequence, I want to thank them for doing good, but I want to emphasize that, from their perspective, this isn't charity, this is part of their overall mission and makes good business sense.

I suspect, as well, that there's some around this table who, themselves, were displaced, were immigrants, recall what it's like, maybe, leaving a place they called home in search of a better life. And as I said today, if there's one thing that I hope comes out of today, it is a shared understanding that the children we see in these refugee camps are as precious as our children. Somebody loves them just as much. And hopefully, we can begin to see through their eyes and imagine what it might be like to not be able to control the safety, the education, and the opportunity that we provide our kids and take for granted.

So thank you all for the extraordinary work, and thanks for helping to tell the story. All right? Thank you guys.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:36 p.m. in Conference Room B at United Nations Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to George Soros, chairman, Soros Fund Management, LLC.

Remarks at the Leaders' Summit on Refugees in New York City
September 20, 2016

Thank you. Well, Yusra, we could not be prouder of you, not just for the great introduction, but more importantly, for your courage and your resilience and the great example that you're setting for children everywhere, including your 8-year-old sister, who I know must look up to you.

Good afternoon. Mr. Secretary-General, Your Excellencies, we are here because, right now, in crowded camps and cities around the

world, there are families—from Darfur in Chad, Palestinians in Lebanon, Afghans in Pakistan, Colombians in Ecuador—who have endured years, in some cases, decades, as refugees, surviving on rations and aid and who dream of someday, somehow, having a home of their own.

We're here because right now there are young girls—like Yusra, like my daughters—who are just as precious and just as gifted—like the 16-year-old refugee from Myanmar that I met in Malaysia—who have suffered unspeakable abuse at the hands of traffickers, modern day slavery, girls who pray at night that someone might rescue them from their torment. There are boys, fleeing the fighting in South Sudan, violence in Central America, wars in North Africa and the Middle East, who are at the mercy of criminals who pack them into trucks or makeshift rafts, and who die on treacherous seas, like little Alan Kurdi from Syria, lifeless, face down on a Turkish beach, in his red shirt and blue pants.

And we are here because right now there are mothers separated from their children—like the woman in a camp in Greece, who held on to her family photographs, heard her children cry on the phone, and who said: "My breath is my children. . . . Every day, I am dying 10, 20, 30 times." We're here because there are fathers who simply want to build a new life and provide for their families, like Refaai Hamo, from Syria, who lost his wife and daughter in the war, who we welcomed to America, and who says, "I still think I have a chance to make a difference in the world."

Mr. Secretary-General; heads of state and heads of government; distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen: As you saw in the video, we are facing a crisis of epic proportions. More than 65 million people have been driven from their homes which is more than any time since the Second World War. Among them are more than 21 million refugees who have fled their countries, everything and everyone they've ever known, fleeing with a suitcase or the clothes on their back.

And I'm here today—I called this summit—because this crisis is one of the most urgent tests of our time: our capacity for collective action. It tests, first and foremost, our ability to end conflicts, because so many of the world's refugees come from just three countries ravaged by war: Syria, Afghanistan, and Somalia.

And I said today to the General Assembly, the mentality that allows for violence with impunity is something we cannot excuse. And collectively, we continue to make excuses. It's not the subject of this summit, but we all know that what is happening in Syria, for example, is unacceptable. And we are not as unified as we should be in pushing to make it stop.

It's a test of our international system where all nations ought to share in our collective responsibilities, because the vast majority of refugees are hosted by just 10 countries who are bearing a very heavy burden—among them Turkey, Pakistan, Lebanon, Iran, Ethiopia—countries that often have fewer resources than many of those who are doing little or nothing.

This is a crisis of our shared security, not because refugees are a threat; refugees, most of whom are women and children, are often fleeing war and terrorism. They are victims. They're families who want to be safe and to work, be good citizens and contribute to their country—I was talking to Yusra—she's now in Germany; she already speaks some English; now she's trying to learn German—who are interested in assimilating and contributing to the society in which they find themselves.

In recent years, in the United States, we've worked to put in intensive screening and security checks so we can welcome refugees and ensure our security; in fact, refugees are subject to more rigorous screening than the average tourist. We've seen in America, hard-working, patriotic refugees serve in our military, and start new businesses and help revitalize communities. I believe refugees can make us stronger.

So the challenge to our security is because when desperate refugees pay cold-hearted traffickers for passage, it funds the same criminals who are smuggling arms and drugs and children. When nations with their own internal difficulties find themselves hosting massive refugee populations for years on end, it can

risk more instability. It oftentimes surfaces tensions in our society when we have disorderly and disproportionate migration into some countries that skews our politics and is subject to demagoguery.

And if we were to turn refugees away simply because of their background or religion or, for example, because they are Muslim, then we would be reinforcing terrorist propaganda that nations like my own are somehow opposed to Islam, which is an ugly lie that must be rejected in all of our countries by upholding the values of pluralism and diversity.

And finally, this crisis is a test of our common humanity: whether we give in to suspicion and fear and build walls or whether we see ourselves in another. Those girls being trafficked and tortured, they could be our daughters. That little boy on the beach could be our son or our grandson. And we cannot avert our eyes or turn our backs. To slam the door in the face of these families would betray our deepest values. It would deny our own heritage as nations—including the United States of America—that have been built by immigrants and refugees. And it would be to ignore a teaching at the heart of so many faiths that we do unto others as we would have them do unto us; that we welcome the stranger in our midst. And just as acting—just as failure to act in the past—for example, by turning away Jews fleeing Nazi Germany—is a stain on our collective conscience, I believe history will judge us harshly if we do not rise to this moment.

Now, first and foremost, we must recognize that refugees are a symptom of larger failures, be it war, ethnic tensions, or persecution. And if we truly want to address the crisis, wars like the savagery in Syria must be brought to an end, and it will be brought to an end through political settlement and diplomacy and not simply by bombing.

We have to insist on greater investments in development and education and democratic institutions, the lack of which fuels so much of the instability we see in the world. And we need to continue to speak up for justice and equality and insist that the universal human rights of every person are upheld, everywhere.

Now, in the face of this crisis, with what often seems grim news, we are grateful for the heroic work of so many around the world: leaders who, often in the face of difficult politics at home, welcome refugees as new neighbors; businesses, such as those I met with right before I came here, which had made commitments worth more than $650 million to empower refugees; international institutions and faith groups and NGOs, including InterAction—the alliance of American NGOs—whose members will invest more than $1.2 billion over the next 3 years to assist the world's displaced people and refugees.

As Americans, we're determined to do our part. The United Nations [United States]* is the largest single donor of humanitarian aid around the world, including to refugees and to the people of Syria. We resettle more refugees than any other nation. As President, I've increased the number of refugees we are resettling to 85,000 this year, which includes 10,000 Syrian refugees, a goal we've exceeded even as we've upheld our rigorous screening. And I called for this summit because we all have to do more.

I want to thank our cohosts, Secretary-General Ban and Jordan. Obviously, Jordan is carrying an enormous burden as a consequence of the conflict, and we are grateful for His Majesty and the work that they've done. Mexico, which is absorbing a great number of refugees from Central America. Sweden, which has made enormous humanitarian contributions in addition to taking on refugees. Germany and Canada, two countries that have gone above and beyond in providing support for refugees. And I want to personally thank Chancellor Merkel and Prime Minister Trudeau and the people of both those countries, because the politics sometimes can be hard, but it's the right thing to do. And Ethiopia, which is—as was noted in the video, bears an enormous burden.

* White House correction.

I also want to thank the more than 50 nations and organizations participating in this summit for making tangible, concrete commitments. Collectively, our nations have increased our contributions to humanitarian organizations and U.N. appeals this year by some $4.5 billion, and that includes a $1 billion increase this year from the United States. This will translate concretely into lifesaving food and medicine and clothing and shelter.

But since we can't just keep on doing the same thing the same way—allowing refugees to languish in camps, disconnected from society—we've also been working with the World Bank to create new financing facilities to assist countries hosting refugees build schools and economic opportunities. As part of these efforts, the United States will contribute at least $50 million to help middle-income countries, and we'll do more to help low-income countries so that refugees and their host communities can flourish and grow stronger together. The refugees in places like Ecuador or Kenya don't always get as much attention as some of the recent migrations, but they need help too. And that's part of our goal here.

Collectively, our nations are roughly doubling the number of refugees that we admit to our countries to more than 360,000 this year. Again, I want to especially commend Germany, Canada, Austria, the Netherlands, and Australia for their continued leadership, as well countries like Argentina and Portugal for their new commitments. And today I'm proud to announce that the United States will continue our leadership role. In the coming fiscal year, starting next week, the United States will welcome and resettle 110,000 refugees from around the world, which is a nearly 60-percent increase over 2015. We intend to do it right, and we will do it safely.

Collectively, the major commitments by Turkey, Thailand, Chad, and Jordan will help more than 1 million children who are refugees get an education, will help one million refugees get training, new skills or find a job. And in all of this work, we cannot forget those who are often the most vulnerable to abuse: young girls and women. So a key part of our efforts must be a renewed commitment to stopping sexual violence and forced marriage. And we need to do more to truly empower women and girls, because every girl deserves the chance to grow and be safe, and every woman should have her human rights and dignity upheld.

So I'm heartened by the commitments that have been made here today. They will help save lives. But we're going to have to be honest: It's still not enough, not sufficient for a crisis of this magnitude. And that's why I believe this summit must be the beginning of a new global woman—movement where everybody does more: more nations donating more assistance and accepting more refugees; more institutions and NGOs finding new ways to deliver aid; more businesses contributing their expertise; more faith groups making this work their own; more young people demanding action; more States and cities and towns coming forward and saying, yes, we will open our communities to our fellow human beings in need; and more pressure on those countries that are willing to perpetrate violence on their own citizens in pursuit of power that carries such a heavy human toll.

We can learn from a young boy named Alex, who lives not far from here in Scarsdale, New York. Last month, like all of us, Alex saw that heartbreaking image: 5-year-old Omran Daqneesh in Aleppo, Syria, sitting in that ambulance, silent and in shock, trying to wipe the blood from his hands.

And here in New York, Alex, who is just 6 years old, sat down and wrote me a letter. And he said, he wanted Omran to come live with him and his family. "Since he won't bring toys," Alex wrote, "I will share my bike and I will teach him how to ride it. I will teach him addition and subtraction. My little sister will be collecting butterflies and fireflies for him. . . . We can all play together. We will give him a family and he will be our brother."

Those are the words of a 6-year-old boy. He teaches us a lot.

The humanity that a young child can display, who hasn't learned to be cynical or suspicious or fearful of other people because of where they're from or how they look or how they

pray, and who just understands the notion of treating somebody that is like him with compassion, with kindness—we can all learn from Alex. Imagine the suffering we could ease, and the lives we could save, and what our world would look like if, seeing a child who's hurting anywhere in the world, we say, "We will give him a family and he will be our brother."

We spend, so many of us in politics and in leadership, so much time devoted to ascending the ladders of power. We spend time maintaining it; we spend time trying to win over public opinion. And maybe sometimes we forget that the only rationale for doing it is to help that little boy. I hope and pray that we remember.

I appreciate all of your support. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:43 p.m. in the U.N. Trusteeship Council Chamber at United Nations Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to Yusra Mardini, a Syrian refugee now living in Berlin, Germany, who competed in the 100-meter freestyle and 100-meter butterfly swimming events for the Refugee Olympic Team at the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in August, and her sister Sarah; Layla Ali Kamal Adeen, a Syrian refugee now living at a camp in Idomeni, Greece, and her children Mustafa, Nerjis, Nazdar, and Masaoud Ramadan, who are now living in Berlin, Germany; Refaai Hamo, a Syrian refugee now living in Detroit, MI; King Abdullah II of Jordan; and Scarsdale, NY, resident Alex Myteberi.

Joint Statement on the Leaders' Summit on Refugees
September 20, 2016

The co-hosts of the Leader's Summit on Refugees, the governments of Canada, Ethiopia, Germany, Jordan, Mexico, Sweden, and the United States, jointly declare their support for the following:

We have come together in support for the millions of refugees and other persons who have been forcibly displaced from their homes around the world. The majority are women and children, who are often at increased risk of violence, exploitation and abuse. At a time when global response mechanisms have been strained past their limits by displacement levels not seen since the Second World War, it is incumbent upon the international community to act.

We recognize that this crisis, while disproportionately driven by conflict in Syria, is truly global in nature, and demands a global response and political solutions. We also recognize the extraordinary steps that the international community has taken over the course of 2016 to mobilize resources and strengthen the systems and institutions that will be required to meet the growing need—including at the London Conference on Supporting Syria and the Region, the UNHCR resettlement conference in Geneva, and the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul. We applaud U.N. Member States for coming together at the high-level plenary meeting on September 19 to reaffirm their shared responsibility for refugees and migrants.

Throughout these engagements, certain priorities have become clear. We must seek to increase international humanitarian assistance funding, offer opportunities for refugee resettlement and alternative forms of legal admissions, and facilitate refugees' access to education and lawful employment. We also note the importance of increasing the pool of countries that provide significant levels of humanitarian assistance beyond the current largest donors, as well as the number of countries providing opportunities for resettlement or other lawful paths to admission. Throughout we have, of course, continued to reaffirm the obligation of states to respect international law, international human rights law, and where applicable, international refugee law and international humanitarian law. We convened today's Summit with these goals in mind and—because of the concerted efforts and generosity of the international community—we are in a position to reflect on the important progress we have made, while recognizing the magnitude of the challenges that lie ahead. In particular:

In order to mobilize more substantial and sustainable funding for UN humanitarian appeals and other international humanitarian organizations, and provide further support to countries hosting large numbers of refugees, we sought a $3 billion increase in global humanitarian financing and commitments to maintain funding in future years. Through our mutual efforts, over the course of 2016, the 32 donors participating today have contributed this year roughly 4.5 billion additional dollars to UN appeals and international humanitarian organizations than in 2015. We commend all governments that have made new and significant humanitarian contributions this year, as well as the important contributions of host countries and will work to provide more aid and direct support. We continue to urge all governments to do even more over the years to come.

In addition, the Summit also sought to provide longer-term solutions for refugees stranded in exile, whose lives are on hold. Governments participating here today have come together, with different types of commitments, to approximately double the global number of refugees resettled and afforded other legal channels of admissions and to improve asylum systems. Some governments have committed to starting or significantly expanding new UNHCR-facilitated third-country resettlement programs and others have greatly increased the numbers of refugees admitted through family reunification or humanitarian admission visas. Several governments have committed to admit significant numbers of refugees into their countries for the first time in recent history. We welcome the inclusion of civil society, which, in many cases, has established private sponsorship programs. To support these efforts, we commend the International Organization for Migration and UNHCR for creating the Emerging Resettlement Countries Joint Support Mechanism, which will help new resettlement countries select, prepare, and support the movement of refugees, and develop systems to welcome and support refugees upon arrival.

We also sought to increase the number of refugees in school by one million globally, and the number of refugees able to lawfully work by one million. Altogether, at least 17 governments participating in today's Summit have committed to strengthen and adapt their policies so that more refugees can attend school and/or lawfully work. The commitments announced today will help ensure that one million children have improved access to education and that one million more refugees have opportunities to pursue opportunities to legally access work. Noting the importance of fostering an environment of inclusion, as applicable, we are pleased that so many countries have made commitments to help facilitate these goals and recognize that, for purposes of implementation, refugee host countries will continue to require sustainable donor support.

In this connection, we welcome efforts by UNICEF and the international community to establish Education Cannot Wait, the world's first fund for education in emergencies and protracted crises, championing children's right to access education in the most complex and dangerous environments. We likewise applaud the World Bank's establishment of a Global Crisis Response Platform, which will provide grants and loans to help low and middle-income countries that so generously host large numbers of refugees. This financing can help provide quality education and economic opportunities for refugees and their host communities. There was consensus that the international community must recognize the protracted nature of the majority of refugee situations and work to strengthen coherence between humanitarian and development support so that our international response provides refugees with the tools necessary to be self-reliant and productive wherever they reside.

Finally, we applaud those countries participating in the summit that, through their pledges, have made qualitative leaps in their commitment to humanitarian financing and/or resettlement and other humanitarian admissions. Others have committed to strengthen their institutional capacity to address the specific

needs of asylum seekers and refugees, especially those of the most vulnerable groups.

In closing, we recognize that no routine mechanism exists yet to facilitate the kind of voluntary responsibility-sharing for refugees that was demonstrated today or to more comprehensively address other challenges arising from large-scale refugee crises. We therefore commit to working together in support of the development of the Global Compact on Responsibility Sharing for Refugees, and to develop tools and institutional structures to improve the international architecture and lay a foundation for addressing both the immediate and the long-term challenges of managing refugee flows effectively and comprehensively.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks at the United States-Africa Business Forum in New York City
September 21, 2016

The President. Well, good morning, everybody.

Audience members. Good morning.

The President. Let me begin by thanking Mayor Bloomberg, not just for the introduction, but for the incredible work that Bloomberg Philanthropies is doing, not just in helping this event, but for all the work that you're doing in promoting entrepreneurship and development throughout Africa. And I'd also like to thank our cohost and a tremendous champion of investment and engagement in Africa, my great friend, Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker.

I also want to welcome our partners from across Africa, including the many heads of state and government leaders who are with us. And I want to acknowledge Senator Chris Coons and leaders from across my administration who share a profound commitment to expanding opportunity and deepening relationships between our countries.

Most importantly, I want to thank all of you: the business leaders, entrepreneurs, on both sides of the Atlantic, who are working very hard every single day to create jobs and to grow economies and to lift up our people.

Now, I gave a long speech yesterday. Some of you had to sit through it. [*Laughter*] I'm going to try to be a little more concise today. I'm here because, as the world gathers in New York City, we're reminded that on so many key challenges that we face—our security, our prosperity, climate change, the struggle for human rights and human dignity, the reduction of conflict—Africa is essential to our progress. Africa's rise is not just important to Africa, it's important to the entire world.

Yes, too many people across the continent still face conflict and hunger and disease. And yes, recent years have brought some stiff economic headwinds. And we have to be relentless in our efforts to end conflicts, and improve security and promote justice. At the same time, the broader trajectory of Africa is unmistakable. Thanks to many of you, Africa is on the move, home to some of the fastest growing economies in the world and a middle class projected to grow to more than a billion customers, an Africa of telecom companies and cleantech startups and Silicon Savannahs, all powered by the youngest population anywhere on the planet.

As President, I've worked to transform our relationship with Africa so that we're working together as equal partners. I'm proud to be the first American President to visit sub-Saharan Africa four times; the first to visit Ethiopia and speak before the African Union; the first to visit Kenya, which I think was obligatory. I would have been in trouble if I hadn't done that. [*Laughter*] I believe I'm also the first American President to dance the *lipala* in Nairobi—[*laughter*]—or to try to dance the *lipala*.

And wherever I've gone, from Senegal to South Africa, Africans insist they do not just want aid, they want trade. They want partners, not patrons. They want to do business and grow businesses and create value and companies that will last and that will help to build a

great future for the continent. And the United States is determined to be that partner for the long term, to accelerate the next era of African growth for all Africans.

And that's why, over the past 8 years, we've dramatically expanded our economic engagement. With your support, we renewed the African Growth and Opportunity Act for another decade, giving African nations unprecedented access to American markets. We launched Trade Africa so that African countries can sell goods and services more easily across borders, both within Africa and with the United States. We created "Doing Business in Africa" campaign to help American businesses, including small businesses, pursue opportunities across Africa. And under Penny's leadership, nearly 300 American companies have taken trade missions to Africa, with more than 8,000 African buyers attending U.S. trade shows.

If you are an African entrepreneur or an American entrepreneur looking for more support, more capital, more technical assistance, there has never been a better time to partner with the United States. Commitments from the Export-Import Bank and the U.S. Trade and Development Agency have doubled. OPIC investments have tripled. Nearly 70 percent of Millennium Challenge Corporation compacts are now with African countries. And we've opened up and expanded new trade and investment offices from Ghana to Mozambique. Through our landmark Power Africa initiative, the United States is mobilizing more than 130 public and private sector partners and over $52 billion to double electricity access across sub-Saharan Africa.

Meanwhile, our Global Entrepreneurship Summits in Morocco and Kenya and our Young Leaders—Young African Leaders Initiative are giving nearly 300,000 talented, striving young Africans the tools and networks to become the entrepreneurs and business leaders of the future. And we've got some of those outstanding young people here today. And 2 years ago, I welcomed many of you to our first-ever U.S.-Africa Business Forum, where we announced billions of dollars in new trade and investment between our countries.

And you can see the results. American investment in Africa is up 70 percent. U.S. exports to Africa have surged. Iconic companies—FedEx, Kellogg's, Google—are growing their presence on the continent. You can hail an Uber in Lagos or Kampala. In the 2 years since our last forum, American and African companies have concluded deals worth nearly $15 billion, which will support African development across the board, from manufacturing to health care to renewable energy. Microsoft and Mawingu Networks are partnering to provide low-cost broadband to rural Kenyans. Procter & Gamble is expanding a plant in South Africa. MasterCard will work with Ethiopian banks so that more Ethiopians can send home remittances.

These are all serious commitments. New relationships are being forged. And I'm pleased that all together, the deals and commitments being announced at this forum add up to more than $9 billion in trade and investment with Africa.

So we are making progress, but we're just scratching the surface. We have so much more work that can be done and will be done. The fact is that, despite significant growth in much of the continent, Africa's entire GDP is still only about the GDP of France. Only a fraction of American exports—about 2 percent—go to Africa. So there's still so much untapped potential. And I may only be in this office for a few more months, but let me suggest a few areas where we need to focus in the years ahead.

We have to keep increasing the trade that creates broad-based growth. In East Africa alone, our new trade hubs have supported 29,000 jobs and helped increase exports to the United States by over a third. So we need to keep working to integrate African economies, diversify African exports, and bring down barriers at the borders. Since we're approaching two decades since AGOA was first passed, we're releasing a report today exploring the future beyond AGOA with trade agreements that are even more enduring and reciprocal.

We also have to keep making it easier to do business in Africa. We know progress is possible. A decade ago, if you wanted to start a busi-

ness in Kenya, it took, on average, 54 days. Today, it takes less than half that. And governments that make additional reforms and cut redtape will have a partner in the United States.

At our last forum, I announced the creation of our Presidential Advisory Council to guide our work together. And today I'm pleased to welcome the newest members of our expanded council so that more industries and insights can shape their recommendations. Feel free to find them later. Bend their ear. Don't be shy. They are excited about their work and excited to hear from you.

We also need to invest more in the infrastructure that is the foundation of future prosperity. And as I indicated earlier, we're especially focused on increasing access to electricity for the two-thirds of sub-Saharan Africans who lack it. Three years after launching Power Africa, we're seeing real progress: solar power and natural gas in Nigeria, off-grid energy in Tanzania, people in rural Rwanda gaining electricity. This means that students can study at night and businesses can stay open. And we are not going to let up. Partners like the World Bank and the African Development Bank are mobilizing billions.

Last month, the Government of Japan made a major commitment to support this work. And together with GE, today we're launching a public-private partnership to support energy enterprises managed by women in Africa. So we're on our way, and by 2030, I believe we can bring electricity to more than 60 million African homes and businesses. And that will be transformative.

But even if we do the infrastructure, even if we're passing more business-friendly laws, even if we're increasing trade, I think all of you know that we're also going to have to keep promoting the good governance that allows for good business. Graft, cronyism, corruption—it stifles growth, scares off investment. A business should begin with a handshake and not a shakedown. [*Laughter*] So, through our efforts like our Open Government Partnership and our Partnership on Illicit Finance, we're going to keep working to encourage transparency, stamp out corruption, and uphold the rule of law. That's what's going to ultimately attract trade and investment and opportunity.

The truth is, is that those governments that are above board and transparent, people want to do business there. People don't want to do business in places where the rules are constantly changing depending on who's up, who's down, whose cousin is who. It creates the kinds of risks that scare investors away.

And finally, we need to invest more in Africa's most precious resource, and that is its people, especially young people: men and women, boys and girls. I've had the opportunity to meet the next generation of leaders and entrepreneurs in Soweto and Dar es Salaam and Dakar. I've welcomed many of them to the White House. They are spectacular. They are itching to make a difference. Their passion is inspiring. Their talent is unmatched. They are hungry for knowledge and information and are willing to take risks. And many of them, because they've come from tough circumstances, by definition they're entrepreneurial. They've had to make a way out of no way and are resilient and resourceful.

So we've got to continue to empower these aspiring leaders, give them the tools, the training, and the support so that a few years from now, they can be sitting in this room. Because if Africa's young people flourish, if they are getting education, if they are getting opportunity, I'm absolutely convinced that Africa will flourish as well.

And they are the future leaders that inspire me. I think of the Rwandan entrepreneur I met earlier this year at one of our entrepreneurship summits. His company is turning biomass into energy. He started his business when he was 19 years old. And a lot of folks didn't get what he was doing or why. He made an interesting comment that sometimes in traditional cultures, in African cultures, the working assumption is, is that young people don't know anything. And since we were in Silicon Valley when he was telling this story, I wanted to point out that folks in Africa may want to rethink that, because if you're over 30 there, you're basically over the hill. [*Laughter*]

But he kept at it. And as he told me, "No matter what you're trying to do, you need the motive in your mind that you want to help your society move forward." He was doing well, but he was also trying to do good.

And that's what this is all about. That's the work that we've got to carry on. This is a U.S.-Africa Business Forum. This is not charity. All of you should be wanting to make money and create great products and great services and be profitable and do right by your investors. But the good news is, in Africa right now, if you are doing well, you can also be doing a lot of good. And if we keep that in mind, if we do more to buy from each other and sell from each other, if we do more to bring down barriers to doing business, if we do more to strengthen infrastructure and innovation and governance, I know we're going to be able to move our societies and economies forward. And that will be good, not just for Africa, but it will be good for the United States and good for the world.

We want Africa as a booming, growing, thriving market, where we can do business, where you've got a young population that is surging. And although this will be the last time I participate in the U.S. Business Forum—U.S.-Africa Business Forum as President, I think you should anticipate that I will be continuing to work with all of you in the years to come, and I know that Penny has done a great job in working to institutionalize these efforts. And when we've got great partners like Mike Bloomberg and the Bloomberg Foundation involved in this, I have no doubt that this is just going to keep on growing, and we're going to look back and say, we were on to something.

Thank you so much, everybody. Appreciate it. Keep up the great work.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:26 a.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Plaza Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to former Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg of New York City, in his capacity as the founder of Bloomberg Philanthropies; and Jean Bosco Nzeyimana, founder and chief executive officer, HABONA Ltd.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel in New York City

September 21, 2016

Prime Minister Netanyahu. Mr. President, it's very good to see you again. First, I want to thank you for the memorandum of understanding that we signed last week. It greatly enhances Israel's security. It fortifies the principle that you've enunciated many times that Israel should be able to defend itself, by itself, against any threat.

Secondly, I want to thank you for the extensive security and intelligence cooperation between our two countries. I don't think people at large understand the breadth and depth of this cooperation, but I know it. And I want to thank you on behalf of all the people of Israel.

Third, I want to thank you for the many meetings we've had in which we discussed how to confront common challenges and how to seize common opportunities. The greatest challenge is, of course, the unremitting fanaticism. The greatest opportunity is to advance a durable peace. That's a goal that I and the people of Israel will never give up on.

We've been fortunate that, in pursuing these two tasks, Israel has no greater friend than the United States of America, and America has no greater friend than Israel. Our alliance has grown decade after decade, through successive Presidents, a bipartisan Congress, and the overwhelming support of the American people. It's an unbreakable bond based on common values, buttressed by common interest, and bound by a shared destiny.

And I want to thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to once again discuss how we can shape that destiny together. And I'd like to add, if I may, one final point. As you conclude your Presidency, I know you're going to be busy with many, many things, much more than

improving what I hear is a terrific golf game. [*Laughter*] Your voice—your influential voice—will be heard for many decades. And I know you'll continue to support Israel's right to defend itself and its right to thrive as a Jewish state. So I want you to know, Barack, that you'll always be a welcome guest in Israel.

And by the way, I don't play golf, but right next to my home in Caesarea, in Israel, is a terrific golf course. So——

President Obama. We'll set up a tee time. [*Laughter*]

Prime Minister Netanyahu. Thank you.

President Obama. Thank you. Thank you so much.

Well, it's good to once again welcome Prime Minister Netanyahu and his delegation here. I want to start by just sending a message that all of the American people, my entire administration, and me, personally, are thinking about Shimon Peres, a great friend, a hero, and giant in the history of Israel. And we are hopeful that he will have a speedy recovery.

I've always joked whenever I've seen Shimon that I wanted to see what he ate and what he did, because he's always looked so good. I know this has been a challenging time for him and his family, but I wanted to make sure that I relay my gratitude to him for his friendship and his leadership in helping to forge a strong U.S.-Israeli bond.

As Prime Minister Netanyahu mentioned, the bond between the United States and Israel is unbreakable. It is based on common values, family ties, a recognition that a Jewish State of Israel is one of our most important allies, and a guiding principle throughout my Presidency—one that I've expressed often to the Prime Minister—is, is that it is important for America's national security to ensure that we have a safe and secure Israel, one that can defend itself.

And so the memorandum of understanding that we recently signed, I think, is indicative of that. What it does is provide an assurance and a foundation for the kinds of ongoing military and intelligence cooperation that has been the hallmark of our relationship. It allows, I think, Israeli planners the kind of certainty in a moment where there's enormous uncertainty in the region. It is a very difficult and dangerous time in the Middle East, and we want to make sure that Israel has the full capabilities it needs in order to keep the Israeli people safe and secure.

So this will give us an opportunity to talk about the challenges that arise out of situations like Syria. I'll also be interested in hearing from the Prime Minister his assessment of conditions within Israel and in the West Bank. Obviously, our hearts go out to those who have been injured, both Israeli and Palestinian. Clearly, there is great danger of not just terrorism, but also flareups of violence. We do have concerns around settlement activity, as well. And our hope is that we can continue to be an effective partner with Israel in finding a path to peace.

Obviously, I'm only going to be President for another few months. The Prime Minister will be there quite a bit longer. And our hope will be that in these conversations we get a sense of how Israel sees the next few years, what the opportunities are and what the challenges are in order to assure that we keep alive the possibility of a stable, secure Israel at peace with its neighbors and a Palestinian homeland that meets the aspirations of their people.

But obviously, these are challenging times. One thing I can say about Prime Minister Netanyahu is, he has always been candid with us, and his team has cooperated very effectively with ours. We very much appreciate it. And I guarantee you that I will visit Israel often, because it is a beautiful country with beautiful people. And Michelle and the girls, I think, resent the fact that I've not taken them on most of these trips, so they're insistent that I do take them. Of course, they will appreciate the fact that the next time I visit Israel I won't have to sit in bilats—[*laughter*]—but instead can enjoy the sights and sounds of a remarkable country.

So thank you very much.

Prime Minister Netanyahu. Thank you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 1 p.m. in the Holmes I room of the Lotte New York Palace hotel. In his remarks, he referred to former President Shimon Peres of Israel, who suffered a stroke on September 13.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Juan Manuel Santos Calderon of Colombia in New York City
September 21, 2016

President Obama. It is a great pleasure to welcome my good friend, President Santos, and his delegation, so we have a chance to visit again. This is the first time that I'm seeing him in person since the historic agreement that was achieved in Colombia, ending the longest war in Latin America and providing an opportunity for Colombia to open an entirely new chapter of its history.

I could not be more supportive of these efforts. The American people welcome these efforts. I recognize that there are going to be a lot of challenges involved in implementation, and I recognize that the people of Colombia still have to lend their voice through a referendum in order for it to move forward. But I think this is an achievement of historic proportions. It ultimately will be good for the region, as well as the people of Colombia. It took a lot of courage and a lot of hard work by a lot of people. And we are very proud to have played a modest part in helping the dialogue go forward.

John Kerry is going to be visiting Colombia on Monday, and my understanding is, he's going to be taking a bipartisan group of congressional Members so that they can help to witness the amazing changes that are going to be taking place. And I also want to just thank President Santos and his delegation for the continued cooperation on a wide range of regional issues, including making sure that we don't slip on the progress that's been made in stamping out transnational drug organizations.

So it's a great achievement, and we're very proud of you. And congratulations.

President Santos. Thank you. Almost 6 years ago, when I decided to take this step, one of the first persons that I informed about my intentions was President Obama. And since then, he has been a great support, every day, every week asking how is it going, and supporting it in every way possible. You appointed a Special Envoy, Bernie Aronson, and he did a terrific job. The Secretary of State has been there many times, pushing the process forward.

And I wanted to give to you a special edition, 297 pages. I think it's the most comprehensive peace agreement to date, probably in history. It's every detail. But you deserve a lot of credit for this very historic agreement, which will change not only Colombia, the whole region. As you said, it is the oldest, longest, cruelest armed conflict that Latin America has had.

And thank you very much from the bottom of my heart, in the name of 50 million Colombians. President Obama, here is the result of this effort.

[*At this point, President Santos presented President Obama with a ceremonial copy of the peace agreement.*]

President Obama. Thank you so much. It's beautiful.

President Santos. Thank you.

President Obama. Thank you. This is—what a great gift. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. in the Holmes I room of the Lotte New York Palace hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin and Reps. Samuel S. Farr and James P. McGovern.

Memorandum on Climate Change and National Security
September 21, 2016

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Climate Change and National Security

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, I hereby direct the following:

Section 1. Purpose. This memorandum establishes a framework and directs Federal departments and agencies (agencies) to perform certain functions to ensure that climate change-related impacts are fully considered in the development of national security doctrine, policies, and plans.

Sec. 2. Background. Climate change poses a significant and growing threat to national security, both at home and abroad. Climate change and its associated impacts affect economic prosperity, public health and safety, and international stability. Extended drought, more frequent and severe weather events, heat waves, warming and acidifying ocean waters, catastrophic wildfires, and rising sea levels all have compounding effects on people's health and well-being. Flooding and water scarcity can negatively affect food and energy production. Energy infrastructure, essential for supporting other key sectors, is already vulnerable to extreme weather and may be further compromised. Impacts of a changing climate can create conditions that promote pest outbreaks and the spread of invasive species as well as plant, animal, and human disease, including emerging infectious disease, and these can further undermine economic growth and livelihoods. Impacts can also disrupt transportation service, cutting off vulnerable communities from relief immediately after events and reducing economic output. These conditions, in turn, can stress some countries' ability to provide the conditions necessary for human security. All of these effects can lead to population migration within and across international borders, spur crises, and amplify or accelerate conflict in countries or regions already facing instability and fragility.

Climate change and associated impacts on U.S. military and other national security-related missions and operations could adversely affect readiness, negatively affect military facilities and training, increase demands for Federal support to non-federal civil authorities, and increase response requirements to support international stability and humanitarian assistance needs.

The costs of preparing for, responding to, and recovering from the impacts of climate change are expected to increase in the coming decades. Some meteorological events (i.e., heat waves and intense precipitation) are projected to become more frequent and more severe, occur in geographic areas not previously exposed to such events, inflict more damage, heighten humanitarian needs, undermine development investments, adversely impact public health, contribute to ecological, social, and political instability, compromise diplomatic goals, and undermine national security interests. There is evidence that the rate of climate change and the resulting impacts are accelerating, even as global efforts to curb greenhouse gas pollution are increasing. The United States must take a comprehensive approach to identifying and acting on climate change-related impacts on national security interests, including by maintaining its international leadership on climate issues.

Sec. 3. Policy. It is the policy of the Federal Government to ensure that the current impacts of climate change, and those anticipated in the coming decades, be identified and considered in the development and implementation of relevant national security doctrine, policies, and plans. This policy builds on the following Presidential directives and policies:

(a) the 2015 *National Security Strategy,* which identified climate change as an urgent and growing threat to our national security, contributing to increased natural disasters, refugee flows, and conflicts over basic resources

like food and water. It added that increased sea levels and storm surges threaten coastal regions, infrastructure, and property, which in turn threatens the global economy, and compounds the growing costs of preparing and restoring infrastructure;

(b) the President's *Climate Action Plan* of June 2013, which included actions to help prepare the United States for the impacts of climate change;

(c) Executive Order 13653 of November 1, 2013 (*Preparing the United States for the Impacts of Climate Change*), which directed Federal agency actions to incorporate climate-resilience considerations into agency operations and other mission objectives;

(d) Executive Order 13677 of September 23, 2014 *(Climate-Resilient International Development)*, which set requirements for systematically integrating climate-resilience considerations into U.S. international development work; and

(e) Executive Order 13693 of March 19, 2015 (*Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade)*, which directed Federal actions to improve environmental performance and Federal sustainability.

Sec. 4. Coordination on Climate Change and National Security.

(a) *The Climate and National Security Working Group*. The Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and the Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, or their designees, will chair an interagency working group (Working Group) to coordinate the development of a strategic approach to identify, assess, and share information on current and projected climate-related impacts on national security interests and to inform the development of national security doctrine, policies, and plans.

(b) *Representation*. The Working Group shall include representatives, at the Assistant Secretary or equivalent level, or their designees, from:

(i) the Department of State;
(ii) the Department of the Treasury;
(iii) the Department of Defense;
(iv) the Department of Justice;
(v) the Department of the Interior;
(vi) the Department of Agriculture;
(vii) the Department of Commerce;
(viii) the Department of Health and Human Services;
(ix) the Department of Transportation;
(x) the Department of Energy;
(xi) the Department of Homeland Security;
(xii) the United States Agency for International Development;
(xiii) the Environmental Protection Agency;
(xiv) the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;
(xv) the Office of the Director of National Intelligence;
(xvi) the U.S. Mission to the United Nations;
(xvii) the Office of Management and Budget;
(xviii) the Council on Environmental Quality;
(xix) the Millennium Challenge Corporation; and
(xx) any other agencies or offices as designated by the Co-Chairs.

(c) *Functions*. The Working Group, in close collaboration with the U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP), shall:

(i) identify the U.S. national security priorities that are within the scope of the Working Group's mission;
(ii) develop recommendations for requirements for climate and social science data and intelligence analyses, as appropriate, that support national security interests;
(iii) catalog climate science data, intelligence analyses, and other products and programs that support or should be considered in the development of national security doctrine, policy, and plans. This catalogue shall include climate and social science data repositories and analytical platforms; climate modeling, simulation, and projection capabilities; and information-sharing tools and resources support-

ing climate risk analyses and assessments, such as the Climate Data Initiative, the Climate Resilience Toolkit, the Global Change Information System, and the National Climate Assessment;

(iv) identify information and program gaps that limit consideration of climate change-related impacts in developing national security doctrine, policies, and plans. Descriptions of these gaps will be provided to Federal science agencies and the United States Intelligence Community to inform future research requirements and priorities, including collection priorities, on climate data, models, simulations, and projections;

(v) facilitate the production and exchange of climate data and information with relevant stakeholders, including the United States Intelligence Community, and private sector partners, as appropriate;

(vi) produce, as appropriate, and make available science-informed intelligence assessments to agencies having responsibilities in the development of national security doctrine, policies, and plans in order to identify climate change-related impacts and prioritize actions related thereto;

(vii) establish, by consensus, guidance for Working Group members on coordinating, sharing, and exchanging climate science data among the members, and with the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC);

(viii) provide a venue for enhancing the understanding of the links between climate change-related impacts and national security interests and discussing the opportunities for climate mitigation and adaptation activities to address national security issues;

(ix) work to improve the Federal Government's capability and capacity to characterize greenhouse gas sources and sinks accurately at sub-continental scales;

(x) in coordination with the NSTC, recommend research guidelines concerning the Federal Government's ability to detect climate intervention activities;

(xi) develop, by consensus, guidance for Working Group members on building climate resilience in countries vulnerable to climate change-related impacts;

(xii) provide information and Working Group-related progress updates to the Council on Climate Preparedness and Resilience, established by Executive Order 13653, *Preparing the United States for the Impacts of Climate Change*, on a quarterly basis;

(xiii) take into account defined requirements and current capabilities described in subsection (4)(c)(ii) and (iii) of this memorandum to facilitate the consideration of climate change-related impacts into national security doctrine, policies, and plans. The Working Group shall develop recommended climate data requirements and consider the cost of the production and exchange of this information, and making this information available;

(xiv) have classified and unclassified capabilities, as required and appropriate, to consolidate and make available climate change-related impact information, intelligence analyses, and assessments for access and use by Working Group member agencies;

(xv) identify the most current information on regional, country, and geographic areas most vulnerable to current and projected impacts of climate variability in the near- (current to 10 years), mid- (10 to 30 years), and long- (more than 30 years) term, in order to support assessments of national security implications of climate change, and identify areas most vulnerable to these impacts during these timeframes;

(xvi) develop recommendations for the Secretary of State to help ensure that the work of U.S. embassies, including their planning processes, are better informed by relevant climate change-related analyses; and

(xvii) coordinate on the development of quantitative models, predictive mapping products, and forecasts to anticipate the various pathways through which climate change may affect public health as an issue of national security.

(d) *Action Plan*. Within 90 days of the date of this memorandum, the Working Group shall, by consensus, develop an Action Plan, which shall identify specific steps that are required to perform the Working Group's functions. The Action Plan shall also include specific objectives, milestones, timelines, and identification of agencies responsible for completion of all actions described therein. The Action Plan shall include recommendations to inform the development of agency implementation plans, as described in section 5 of this memorandum. The Action Plan shall be submitted to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and the Assistant to the President for Science and Technology.

Sec. 5. Federal Agency Implementation Plan. Within 150 days of the date of this memorandum, the agencies listed in subsection 4(b) of this memorandum shall each develop an appropriate implementation plan supporting the policy of this memorandum. Such implementation plans may be classified, as required, to meet specific agency requirements. Implementation plans shall consider for inclusion, but not be limited to, a description of how the respective agencies will accomplish the following actions:

(a) identify, sustain, and strengthen climate-related data repositories, tools, and modeling products that inform climate change-related impacts on national security;

(b) identify climate change-related risks to agency missions, and risks that may be caused by agency policies, programs, and actions concerning international development objectives, fragility, and regional stability;

(c) pursue agency adaptation strategies and methods that address climate change-related impacts on national security and homeland defense;

(d) identify and implement climate change-related information-sharing opportunities and arrangements through international development activities, military-to-military engagements, and government-to-government climate-related data exchanges;

(e) identify economic considerations arising from the impacts of climate change globally and the resulting specific impacts on national security, including macroeconomic analyses and data-sharing mechanisms;

(f) identify the potential impact of climate change on human mobility, including migration and displacement, and the resulting impacts on national security;

(g) identify climate change-related impacts on global water and food security and nutrition and the resulting impacts on national security, and recommend actions to mitigate these impacts;

(h) identify climate change-related global health security concerns affecting humans, animals, and plants, and develop options to address them;

(i) develop an agency-specific approach to address climate-related hazards and threats to national security;

(j) determine and act on climate change-related threats to infrastructure at the asset, system, and regional level and act to strengthen the safety, security, and resilience of infrastructure critical to national security; and

(k) incorporate climate change-related impact information and considerations into agency technical and executive education and training programs.

Sec. 6. Definitions. For the purposes of this memorandum:

(a) "Adaptation" refers to the adjustment in natural or human systems in anticipation of or in response to a changing environment in a way that effectively uses beneficial opportunities or reduces negative effects.

(b) "Climate" refers to the prevailing meteorological conditions over a period of several decades, including the typical frequency of occurrence and duration of extreme storms, heat waves, precipitation, droughts, cloudiness, winds, ocean temperatures, and other events that a region is likely to encounter.

(c) "Climate change" refers to detectable changes in one or more climate system components over multiple decades, including changes in the average temperature of the atmosphere or ocean; changes in regional precipitation, winds, and cloudiness; and changes in the severity or duration of extreme weather, including droughts, floods, and storms.

(d) "Climate modeling" refers to the mathematical representation of the set of interdependent components of the climate system, including the atmosphere and ocean, cryosphere, ecology, land use, natural greenhouse gas emissions, and anthropogenic greenhouse emissions.

(e) "Fragility" refers to a condition that results from a dysfunctional relationship between state and society and the extent to which that relationship fails to produce policy outcomes that are considered effective or legitimate.

(f) "Global health security" refers to activities required, both proactive and reactive, to minimize vulnerability to acute public health events that endanger the collective health of populations living across geographical regions and international boundaries and includes the efforts of the Global Health Security Agenda to establish capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to disease threats, whether naturally occurring, deliberate, or accidental.

(g) "United States Intelligence Community" has the same definition as used in section 3003 of title 50, United States Code (Definitions), and section 3.5(h) of Executive Order 12333 of December 4, 1981 (United States Intelligence Activities), as amended.

(h) "National security" refers to the protection of the Nation and its people and interests.

(i) "Resilience" refers to the ability to anticipate, prepare for, and adapt to changing conditions and to withstand, respond to, and recover rapidly from disruptions.

Sec. 7. General Provisions. (a) This memorandum shall be implemented consistent with applicable laws, regulations, Executive Orders, and policies, including the National Security Strategy and the Climate Action Plan, and subject to the availability of appropriations.

(b) Nothing in this memorandum shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

(i) the authority granted by law to a department or agency, or the head thereof; or

(ii) the functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budgetary, administrative, or legislative proposals.

(c) All activities conducted pursuant to this memorandum shall be undertaken consistent with all applicable classification requirements set forth in law, Executive Orders, regulation, and policy.

(d) This memorandum is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

BARACK OBAMA

Remarks on Presenting the National Medal of Arts and the National Humanities Medal
September 22, 2016

The President. Thank you! Everybody, please have a seat, have a seat. Thank you so much. Everybody, please sit down. I can tell this is a rowdy crowd. Sit down. [*Laughter*]

Welcome to the White House, everybody. Now, throughout my time here, Michelle and I have tried to make it a priority to promote the arts and the humanities, especially for our young people, and it's because we believe that the arts and the humanities are, in many ways, reflective of our national soul. They're central to who we are as Americans: dreamers and storytellers and innovators and visionaries. They're what helps us make sense of the past,

the good and the bad. They're how we chart a course for the future while leaving something of ourselves for the next generation to learn from.

And we are here today to honor the very best of their fields, creators who give every piece of themselves to their craft. As Mel Brooks once said—[*laughter*]—to her—to his writers on "Blazing Saddles," which is a great film: "Write anything you want, because we'll never be heard from again. We will all be arrested for this movie." [*Laughter*]

Now, to be fair, Mel also said, a little more eloquently, that "every human being has hundreds of separate people living inside his skin. And the talent of a writer is his ability to give them their separate names, identities, personalities and have them relate to other characters living within him." And that, I think, is what the arts and the humanities do. They lift up our identities and make us see ourselves in each other. And today's honorees each possess a gift for this kind of creative empathy, a gift that allows us to exchange a sense of what's most important and most profound in us and to identify with our collective experience as Americans.

Now, along with Mel, we have an impressive crew with us here today. We've got Terry Gross and a whole bunch of people who Terry Gross has interviewed. [*Laughter*] We have Jane Chu, our Chair of the National Endowment of the Arts, and Bro Adams, Chair of the National Endowment of the Humanities, who also just has a cool name. [*Laughter*] Bro. [*Laughter*] And we thank the Members of Congress who are here for their strong support of the arts and the humanities.

But today the focus is on our recipients. And today's recipients of the National Medals of the Arts and the Humanities are poets, musicians, artists, journalists, professors, historians, and at least one chef. Their paths and their mediums could hardly be more different, and that's what makes them great. They take their piece of this big, bold, diverse, energetic country, they reshape it, and then they share it with us. They open our experience to theirs, and for that, we honor them here today.

We honor poets like Louise Glück, whose probing poems capture the quiet drama of nature and the quiet emotions of everyday people. Throughout her life, fastidious, attentive readers have taught her that there are "ears that receive." As a professor, she strives to be a receiving ear for others, and she's inspired generations of young poets who are her students and readers alike. Once, when asked how she hoped the world would respond to her work, Louise said she wanted William Blake to come down from heaven and say, "You did a very good job." [*Laughter*] Now, I don't think that's happened. [*Laughter*] So you will have to settle for us today. [*Laughter*]

We honor musicians like Philip Glass. Like his own life as a Juilliard-trained New York City cab driver, Philip's work is full of contradictions that cross genres and cultures. When the music he made strayed from neat conventions, audiences didn't know always how to react. I understand that there have been some eggs thrown occasionally. [*Laughter*] But, as Philip said, "What seems strange or bizarre for any short period of time starts becoming familiar, and whatever artistic rewards or secrets it might have become revealed." So change isn't easy. But over his career of symphonies and operas and film scores, Philip Glass has proven that change can be beautiful.

We honor historians like Isabel Wilkerson, whose masterpiece "The Warmth of Other Suns" made the story of the Great Migration of African Americans from the South to the North and West accessible to a new generation of Americans. To craft this remarkable book, Isabel spent 15 painstaking years trekking between archives and living rooms, interviewing more than 1,200 people who told her their families' stories of heartbreak and endurance and ultimately overcoming, stories they often found too painful to share even with their own children. And through it all, she had to conquer the enormity of her task and prove wrong the doubts of others. And because she did, one of the most important chapters in our history is told in a book any young person can pick up and read.

And that's just a sampling of the extraordinary accomplishments that are represented here today. We honor Rudolfo Anaya, José Andrés, Mel Brooks, Ron Chernow, Sandra Cisneros, Philip Glass, Louise Glück, Berry Gordy, Santiago Jiménez, Moisés Kaufman, Ralph Lemon, Audra McDonald, Terry Gross, James McBride, Louis Menand, the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, Elaine Pagels, the Prison University Project, Luis Valdez, Abraham Verghese, Jack Whitten, Isabel Wilkerson. We also honor Wynton Marsalis, who unfortunately could not make it here today, and Morgan Freeman, who undoubtedly is off playing a Black President again. The—[*laughter*]. He never lets me have my moment. [*Laughter*] You know, it's just—he's always, like—[*laughter*].

All of today's honorees work in an age where the stories we tell and the technologies that we use to tell them are more diverse than ever before and as diverse as the country that we love. "Every human being has hundreds of separate people living inside his skin." It echoes what Whitman once wrote about America, that we are large, containing multitudes. It's what's so great about this country, that there is no single, set way to contribute. All of us belong. All of us have a story to tell. Even when you think your story is too different, too strange, too unique, there's someone out there who's been waiting their whole life to hear you tell your story, because it's just like theirs. What a great gift all of you have given us.

So today we thank you, today's honorees, who have had the bravery to go first and tell their story and make us feel a little bit better about ours.

So, with that, let's give out some awards. Let's read the citations. Thank you.

They're very big, by the way. [*Laughter*]

[*At this point, Lt. Cmdr. Richard I. Lawlor, USN, Navy Aide to the President, read the first 10 citations, and the President presented the medals, assisted by Lt. Cmdr. Ginny R. Nadolny, USCG, Coast Guard Aide to the President. The President then spoke to Lt. Cmdr. Lawlor as follows.*]

The President. Did we skip Audra McDonald?

[*The citation for musician and actor Audra McDonald appeared to be misplaced.*]

The President. I was thinking of getting—[*inaudible*]. [*Laughter*] You're feeling kind of left out. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. From Fresno. From Fresno, Mr. President.

The President. Huh?

Audience member. From Fresno.

The President. See, you've got a lot of boosters here. [*Laughter*] I can make up the citation if you want. [*Laughter*]

Lt. Cmdr. Lawlor. Let's do that. Let's do that, sir. [*Laughter*]

The President. All right. You don't have it in there?

Lt. Cmdr. Lawlor. No, sir.

[*A White House aide brought the citation to the podium.*]

The President. Here we go. [*Laughter*]

Lt. Cmdr. Lawlor. I'm sorry. Audra McDonald. [*Applause*]

[*Lt. Cmdr. Lawlor read the citation. After being presented with her medal, Ms. McDonald returned to her seat.*]

Audience member. We love you, Audra!

The President. From Fresno. [*Laughter*]

Audience members. From Fresno!

[*Lt. Cmdr. Lawlor continued reading the citations, and the President presented the medals, assisted by Lt. Cmdr. Nadolny. As writer and educator Rudolfo Anaya returned to his seat after receiving his medal, he spoke as follows.*]

Mr. Anaya. Viva Obama!

The President. This really is a rowdy crowd. [*Laughter*] Usually, these are much more serious. [*Inaudible*]

[*Lt. Cmdr. Lawlor read the remaining citations, and the President presented the medals, assisted by Lt. Cmdr. Nadolny.*]

The President. Those are our honorees. Let's give them a big round of applause again. [*Applause*] Hey! Well, once again, we thank them for their extraordinary contributions. We look forward to all the work they will be doing in the future.

Just a couple of other comments. One, I think Louise Glück has the coolest outfit—[*laughter*]—especially those spiked sneakers. I'm glad that Audra is already a good friend of mine. [*Laughter*] So the fact that they kind of left out the citation, I think she'll forgive me. And I do think Mel Brooks kind of set the tone for this thing—[*laughter*]—because, historically, this has been a much more staid affair. [*Laughter*] But somehow, I think my quote of him in the beginning, it threw everything off. [*Laughter*]

Everybody, have fun. Enjoy the reception. Thank you. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:49 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to writer, actor, filmmaker, and playwright Mel Brooks; Terry Gross, host and co-executive producer, NPR's "Fresh Air" program; Louise Glück, adjunct professor of English and RosenKranz Writer in Residence, Yale University; José Ramón Andrés Puerta, chef/owner, ThinkFoodGroup; historian Ron Chernow; writer Sandra Cisneros; Berry Gordy, Jr., founder, Motown Records; musicians Santiago Jiménez, Jr., and Wynton Marsalis; playwrights and directors Moisés Kaufman and Luis Valdez; choreographer and dancer Ralph Lemon; author, musician, and screenwriter James McBride; Louis Menand, Anne T. and Robert M. Bass Professor of English, Harvard University; Elaine Pagels, Harrington Spear Paine Foundation Professor of Religion, Princeton University; Abraham Verghese, Linda R. Meier and Joan F. Lane Provostial Professor, Stanford University School of Medicine; painter Jack Whitten; and actor Morgan Freeman. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the reading of the citations.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Accession of Montenegro to the North Atlantic Treaty
September 22, 2016

Dear Mr. Chairman: (Dear Senator:) (Dear Representative:)

Pursuant to section 3(2)(E)(i) of the Resolution of Ratification to the Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic adopted on April 30, 1998, I am pleased to submit the enclosed report.

In doing so, I reiterate my appreciation for efforts to work with me in advancing a Europe whole, free, and at peace.

As provided in the Resolution, the enclosed report includes:

(I) An evaluation of how Montenegro will further the principles of the North Atlantic Treaty and contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area;

(II) An evaluation of the eligibility of Montenegro for membership based on the principles and criteria identified by NATO and the United States, including the military readiness of the country;

(III) An explanation of how an invitation to Montenegro would affect the national security interests of the United States;

(IV) A United States Government analysis of the common-funded military requirements and costs associated with integrating Montenegro into NATO and an analysis of the shares of those costs to be borne by NATO members, including the United States;

(V) A preliminary analysis of the implications for the United States defense budget and other United States budgets of integrating Montenegro into NATO; and
(VI) An analysis of Montenegro's ability to meet the full range of the financial burdens of NATO membership, and the likely impact upon the military effectiveness of NATO of Montenegro, if Montenegro were to be admitted to NATO.

This report is in both classified and unclassified forms, as provided in the Resolution.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to W. Thad Cochran, chairman, and Barbara A. Mikulski, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; John S. McCain III, chairman, and John F. Reed, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Robert P. Corker, Jr., chairman, and Benjamin L. Cardin, ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Harold D. Rogers, chairman, and Nita M. Lowey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations; W. McClellan "Mac" Thornberry, chairman, and D. Adam Smith, ranking member, House Committee on Armed Services; and Edward R. Royce, chairman, and Eliot L. Engel, ranking member, House Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Remarks at a Reception Celebrating the Opening of the National Museum of African American History and Culture
September 23, 2016

The President. Well, welcome, everybody. This is an exceptionally good-looking group. [*Laughter*] And there are just so many friends here that it feels like one of our house parties—[*laughter*]—but there's no dancing this afternoon. We're here just to acknowledge what an extraordinary achievement has been accomplished by Mr. Lonnie Bunch and everybody who helped make this day possible.

Now, I want to just talk about Lonnie for a second. When Lonnie first came here from Chicago to start work on this museum a decade ago, he could not even find somebody to give him a key to his office. [*Laughter*] Nobody had heard of this museum. And now you cannot miss it.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. A breathtaking new building right in the heart of the National Mall and that is what we call progress.

Audience member. Yes!

The President. It could not have been done without the persistence, the wisdom, the dedication, the savvy, the ability to make people feel guilty—[*laughter*]—the begging, the dealmaking, and just the general street smarts of Lonnie——

Audience member. That's right.

The President. ——and his entire team. So please give him a big round of applause for all the work that he has done.

But of course, this is also about more than Lonnie. This is about people who for more than a century, advocated and organized and raised funds and donated artifacts so that the story of the African American experience could take its rightful place in our national memory. It's a story that is full of tragedy and setbacks, but also great joy and great victories. And it is a story that is not just part of the past, but it is alive and well today in every corner of America. And that's certainly true today in this house, a house that was built by slaves.

Audience members. Yes. Yes.

The President. Now, I can't name everybody that is here, but I'm going to have to give you a little bit of a taste. This room is like a living museum of its own. Right now Madame Tussauds would be very jealous. [*Laughter*]

We've got icons of the entertainment industry like Quincy Jones and Dick Gregory and Phylicia Rashad.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. We've got the first Black woman in space, Mae Jemison. And we have the woman who owns the universe, Oprah Winfrey. [*Laughter*]

We've got those drum majors for justice, like John Lewis.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. And Andrew Young.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. And C.T. Vivian.

Audience member. There you go!

The President. And Jesse Jackson.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. And we've got the next generation of warriors for justice, like Brittany Packnett and DeRay Mckesson.

We've got personal heroes of mine like Harry Belafonte, who still is the best looking man in the room at 90-something years old. [*Laughter*] I'm just telling the truth. [*Laughter*]

So this is an extraordinary group. But the thing about this museum is that it's more about—it's more than just telling stories about the famous. It's not just about the icons. There is plenty of space for Harriet Tubman and Dr. King and Muhammed Ali. But what makes the museum so powerful and so visceral is that it's the story of all of us.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. The folks whose names you never heard of, but whose contributions, day after day, decade after decade, combined to push us forward and the entire Nation forward.

It's the maids who decided, you know what, I'm tired of segregation, and I'm going to walk for my freedom. It's the porters who not only worked tirelessly to support their families, but ultimately helped bring about the organization that led to better working conditions for all Americans here in the United States. It's about our moms and grandparents and uncles and aunts who just did the right thing and raised great families, despite assaults on their dignity on every single day.

You see it in the dignity of the artifacts that are in the museum: the dignity of an enslaved family, what it must have been like to try to live in that tiny cabin; those slaves who dared to marry, even though it was illegal for them to do so; folks who were forced to sit in the back of a train, but went about their business anyway and tried to instill in their children a sense that this isn't who we are and there's going to be more someday.

You see it in the men and the women who rushed to the warfronts to secure all of our freedom, understanding that when they came home they might not yet be free; the students who walked passed angry crowds to integrate our schools; the families huddling around a Bible to steel their faith for the challenges ahead; that quiet, determined dignity and hope.

Everybody here has somebody in mind when we think of those kinds of folks, who couldn't make it to this room, but whose stories are our stories——

Audience member. Yes.

The President. ——and whose stories are represented at this museum. It might be an ancestor who ran to freedom or an aunt or uncle who pushed back against Jim Crow or a friend who marched or sat in. Or it might be young people who were organizing against cynicism today.

But the point is that all of us cannot forget that the only reason that we're standing here is because somebody somewhere stood up for us: stood up when it was risky, stood up when it was not popular. And somehow, standing up together managed to change the world.

You know, the timing of this is fascinating—[*laughter*].

Audience member. Yes.

The President. ——because in so many ways, it is the best of times, but in many ways, these are also troubled times.

Audience member. Yes.

Audience member. Yes, it is. Yes.

The President. History doesn't always move in a straight line.

Audience member. That's right.

The President. And without vigilance, we can go backwards as well as forwards.

Audience members. That's right. That's right.

The President. And so part of the reason that I am so happy the museum is opening this weekend is because it allows all of us as Americans to put our current circumstances——

Audience member. Yes.

The President. ——in a historical context.

Audience members. That's right. Yes! Yes!

The President. My hope is that as people are seeing what's happened in Tulsa or Charlotte on television and perhaps are less familiar with not only the history of the African American experience, but also how recent some of these challenges have been, upon visiting the museum, may step back and say, I understand.

Audience member. Yes.

The President. I sympathize. I empathize. I can see why folks might feel angry, and I want to be part of the solution——

Audience member. Yes!

The President. ——as opposed to resisting change.

Audience member. That's right.

The President. My hope is that Black folks watching those same images on television, and then seeing the history represented at this museum, can say to themselves, the struggles we're going through today are connected to the past, and yet all that progress we've made tells me that I cannot and will not sink into despair.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Because if we join hands, and if we do things right, if we maintain our dignity, and we continue to appeal to the better angels of this Nation, progress will be made.

I was telling Michelle—many of you know I get 10 letters a day from constituents, and it's a great way for me to keep a pulse on how folks other than the pundits on cable TV are thinking. [*Laughter*] And it's a—I know it's a representative group because sometimes people say, Mr. President, we just love you, and we especially love Michelle. [*Laughter*] And you're doing such a great job and thank you. And then there are others who write and say, Mr. President, you're an idiot—[*laughter*]—and you've ruined this country. And so I know I'm getting a real—[*laughter*]—sampling of American public opinion.

Last night, as I was reading through my letters, I'd say about half of them said, Mr. President, why are you always against police? And why aren't you doing enough to deal with these rioters and the violence? And then the other half were with some Black folks saying, Mr. President, why aren't you doing something about the police? [*Laughter*] And when are we actually going to get justice?

And I understand the nature of that argument because this is a dialogue we've been having for 400 years.

Audience members. Yes! Tell the truth!

The President. And the fact of the matter is, is that one of the challenges we have in generating a constructive discussion about how to solve these problems is because what people see on television and what they hear on the radio is bereft of context and ignores history.

Audience member. Yes!

The President. And so people are just responding as if none of what's represented in this museum ever happened. And that's true for all of us, not just some of us.

And so, when I imagine children—White, Black, Latino, Asian, Native American—wandering through that museum and sitting at that lunch counter and imagining what it would be like to stand on that auction block——

Audience member. Oh, yes!

The President. ——and then also looking at Shaq's shoes—[*laughter*]—and Chuck Berry's red Cadillac—[*laughter*]—my hope is, is that this complicated, difficult, sometimes harrowing, but I believe ultimately triumphant, story will help us talk to each other.

Audience member. That's right!

The President. And more important, listen to each other, and even more important, see each other——

Audience members. Yes! Yes!

The President. ——and recognize the common humanity that makes America what it is.

So that's a lot of weight to put on one institution.

[*At this point, the First Lady patted National Museum of African American History and Culture Director Lonnie G. Bunch's shoulder.*]

The First Lady. But you can do it. [*Laughter*]

The President. But Michelle and I, having taken Michelle's mom and our daughters to see it, we feel confident that it will not just meet expectations, but far exceed them. And it would not have happened without all of you, so you should be very, very proud.

Congratulations. God bless you. God bless America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:51 p.m. in the Grand Foyer at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to musicians Quincy D. Jones, Jr., Harold G. Belafonte, Jr., and Chuck Berry; comedian Richard C. Gregory; actor Phylicia Rashad; former astronaut and physician Mae C. Jemison; Oprah Winfrey, chairman and chief executive officer, HARPO Entertainment Group; civil rights activists Andrew J. Young, Jr., Cordy Tindell "C.T." Vivian, Jesse L. Jackson, Sr., and DeRay Mckesson; Brittany N. Packnett, vice president of national community alliances, Teach For America; and former National Basketball Association player Shaquille O'Neal. He also referred to his mother-in-law Marian Robinson.

Message to the Senate Returning Without Approval the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act
September 23, 2016

To the Senate of the United States:

I am returning herewith without my approval S. 2040, the "Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act" (JASTA), which would, among other things, remove sovereign immunity in U.S. courts from foreign governments that are not designated state sponsors of terrorism.

I have deep sympathy for the families of the victims of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 (9/11), who have suffered grievously. I also have a deep appreciation of these families' desire to pursue justice and am strongly committed to assisting them in their efforts.

Consistent with this commitment, over the past 8 years, I have directed my Administration to pursue relentlessly al-Qa'ida, the terrorist group that planned the 9/11 attacks. The heroic efforts of our military and counterterrorism professionals have decimated al-Qa'ida's leadership and killed Osama bin Laden. My Administration also strongly supported, and I signed into law, legislation which ensured that those who bravely responded on that terrible day and other survivors of the attacks will be able to receive treatment for any injuries resulting from the attacks. And my Administration also directed the Intelligence Community to perform a declassification review of "Part Four of the Joint Congressional Inquiry into Intelligence Community Activities Before and After the Terrorist Attacks of September 11," so that the families of 9/11 victims and broader public can better understand the information investigators gathered following that dark day of our history.

Notwithstanding these significant efforts, I recognize that there is nothing that could ever erase the grief the 9/11 families have endured. My Administration therefore remains resolute in its commitment to assist these families in their pursuit of justice and do whatever we can to prevent another attack in the United States. Enacting JASTA into law, however, would neither protect Americans from terrorist attacks nor improve the effectiveness of our response to such attacks. As drafted, JASTA would allow private litigation against foreign governments in U.S. courts based on allegations that such foreign governments' actions abroad made them responsible for terrorism-related injuries on U.S. soil. This legislation would permit litigation against countries that have neither been designated by the executive branch as state sponsors of terrorism nor taken direct actions in the United States to carry out an attack here.

The JASTA would be detrimental to U.S. national interests more broadly, which is why I am returning it without my approval.

First, JASTA threatens to reduce the effectiveness of our response to indications that a foreign government has taken steps outside our borders to provide support for terrorism, by taking such matters out of the hands of national security and foreign policy professionals and placing them in the hands of private litigants and courts.

Any indication that a foreign government played a role in a terrorist attack on U.S. soil is a matter of deep concern and merits a forceful, unified Federal Government response that considers the wide range of important and effective tools available. One of these tools is designating the foreign government in question as a state sponsor of terrorism, which carries with it a litany of repercussions, including the foreign government being stripped of its sovereign immunity before U.S. courts in certain terrorism-related cases and subjected to a range of sanctions. Given these serious consequences, state sponsor of terrorism designations are made only after national security, foreign policy, and intelligence professionals carefully review all available information to determine whether a country meets the criteria that the Congress established.

In contrast, JASTA departs from longstanding standards and practice under our Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act and threatens to strip all foreign governments of immunity from judicial process in the United States based solely upon allegations by private litigants that a foreign government's overseas conduct had some role or connection to a group or person that carried out a terrorist attack inside the United States. This would invite consequential decisions to be made based upon incomplete information and risk having different courts reaching different conclusions about the culpability of individual foreign governments and their role in terrorist activities directed against the United States—which is neither an effective nor a coordinated way for us to respond to indications that a foreign government might have been behind a terrorist attack.

Second, JASTA would upset longstanding international principles regarding sovereign immunity, putting in place rules that, if applied globally, could have serious implications for U.S. national interests. The United States has a larger international presence, by far, than any other country, and sovereign immunity principles protect our Nation and its Armed Forces, officials, and assistance professionals, from foreign court proceedings. These principles also protect U.S. Government assets from attempted seizure by private litigants abroad. Removing sovereign immunity in U.S. courts from foreign governments that are not designated as state sponsors of terrorism, based solely on allegations that such foreign governments' actions abroad had a connection to terrorism-related injuries on U.S. soil, threatens to undermine these longstanding principles that protect the United States, our forces, and our personnel.

Indeed, reciprocity plays a substantial role in foreign relations, and numerous other countries already have laws that allow for the adjustment of a foreign state's immunities based on the treatment their governments receive in the courts of the other state. Enactment of JASTA could encourage foreign governments to act reciprocally and allow their domestic courts to exercise jurisdiction over the United States or U.S. officials—including our men and women in uniform—for allegedly causing injuries overseas via U.S. support to third parties. This could lead to suits against the United States or U.S. officials for actions taken by members of an armed group that received U.S. assistance, misuse of U.S. military equipment by foreign forces, or abuses committed by police units that received U.S. training, even if the allegations at issue ultimately would be without merit. And if any of these litigants were to win judgments—based on foreign domestic laws as applied by foreign courts—they would begin to look to the assets of the U.S. Government held abroad to satisfy those judgments, with potentially serious financial consequences for the United States.

Third, JASTA threatens to create complications in our relationships with even our closest

partners. If JASTA were enacted, courts could potentially consider even minimal allegations accusing U.S. allies or partners of complicity in a particular terrorist attack in the United States to be sufficient to open the door to litigation and wide-ranging discovery against a foreign country—for example, the country where an individual who later committed a terrorist act traveled from or became radicalized. A number of our allies and partners have already contacted us with serious concerns about the bill. By exposing these allies and partners to this sort of litigation in U.S. courts, JASTA threatens to limit their cooperation on key national security issues, including counterterrorism initiatives, at a crucial time when we are trying to build coalitions, not create divisions.

The 9/11 attacks were the worst act of terrorism on U.S. soil, and they were met with an unprecedented U.S. Government response. The United States has taken robust and wide-ranging actions to provide justice for the victims of the 9/11 attacks and keep Americans safe, from providing financial compensation for victims and their families to conducting worldwide counterterrorism programs to bringing criminal charges against culpable individuals. I have continued and expanded upon these efforts, both to help victims of terrorism gain justice for the loss and suffering of their loved ones and to protect the United States from future attacks. The JASTA, however, does not contribute to these goals, does not enhance the safety of Americans from terrorist attacks, and undermines core U.S. interests.

For these reasons, I must veto the bill.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
September 23, 2016.

The President's Weekly Address
September 24, 2016

Hi, everybody. This weekend, we'll dedicate the newest American icon on our National Mall: the National Museum of African American History and Culture. It's a beautiful building, five stories high and some 70 feet below the ground, situated just across the street from the Washington Monument.

And this museum tells a story of America that hasn't always taken a front seat in our national narrative. As a people, we've rightfully passed on the tales of the giants who built this country. But too often, willful or not, we've chosen to gloss over or ignore entirely the experience of millions upon millions of others.

But this museum chooses to tell a fuller story. It's doesn't gauze up some bygone era or avoid uncomfortable truths. Rather, it embraces the patriotic recognition that America is a constant work in progress; that each successive generation can look upon our imperfections and decide that it is within our collective power to align this Nation with the high ideals of our founding.

That's what you'll see inside. You'll see it in the shackles of an enslaved child and in the hope of Harriet Tubman's gospel hymnal. You'll see it in the tragedy of Emmett Till's coffin and in the resilience of a lunch counter stool and the triumph of a Tuskegee airplane. You'll see it in the shadow of a prison guard tower and in the defiance of Jesse Owens's cleats and in the American pride of Colin Powell's uniform.

All of that isn't simply the African American story, it's part of the American story. And so it is entirely fitting that we tell this story on our National Mall, the same place we tell the stories of Washington and Jefferson and our independence; the story of Lincoln, who saved our Union, and the GIs who defended it; the story of King, who summoned us all toward the mountaintop.

That's what we'll celebrate not just this weekend, but in the years and generations ahead: a fuller account of our glorious American story. It's a chance to reflect on our past and set a course for the future. Be-

cause here in this country, all of us, no matter what our station in life, have the chance to pick up the pen and write our own chapter for our time.

Thanks, everybody, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 2:30 p.m. on September 23 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on September 24. In the address, the President referred to former Secretary of State Colin L. Powell. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 23, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on September 24. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at the Dedication Ceremony for the National Museum of African American History and Culture
September 24, 2016

James Baldwin once wrote, "For while the tale of how we suffer, and how we are delighted, and how we may triumph is never new, it always must be heard." For while the tale of how we suffer, and how we are delighted, and how we may triumph is never new, it always must be heard.

Today, as so many generations have before, we gather on our National Mall to tell an essential part of our American story, one that has at times been overlooked. We come not just for today, but for all time.

President and Mrs. Bush; President Clinton; Vice President and Dr. Biden; Chief Justice Roberts; Secretary Skorton; Reverend Butts; distinguished guests: Thank you. Thank you for your leadership in making sure this tale is told. We're here in part because of you and because of all those Americans—the Civil War vets, the civil rights foot soldiers, the champions of this effort on Capitol Hill—who, for more than a century, kept the dream of this museum alive.

It includes our leaders in Congress, Paul Ryan and Nancy Pelosi. It includes one of my heroes, John Lewis, who, as he has so often, took the torch from those who came before him and brought us past the finish line. It includes the philanthropists and benefactors and advisory members who have so generously given not only their money, but their time. It includes the Americans who offered up all the family keepsakes tucked away in grandma's attic. And of course, it includes a man without whose vision and passion and persistence we would not be here today: Mr. Lonnie Bunch.

What we can see of this building—the towering glass, the artistry of the metalwork—is surely a sight to behold. But beyond the majesty of the building, what makes this occasion so special is the larger story it contains. Below us, this building reaches down 70 feet, its roots spreading far wider and deeper than any tree on this Mall. And on its lowest level, after you walk past remnants of a slave ship, after you reflect on the immortal declaration that "all men are created equal," you can see a block of stone. On top of this stone sits a historical marker, weathered by the ages. And that marker reads: "General Andrew Jackson and Henry Clay spoke from this slave block . . . during the year 1830."

I want you to think about this. Consider what this artifact tells us about history, about how it's told, and about what can be cast aside. On a stone where day after day, for years, men and women were torn from their spouse or their child, shackled and bound, and bought and sold, and bid like cattle; on a stone worn down by the tragedy of over a thousand bare feet—for a long time, the only thing we considered important, the singular thing we once chose to commemorate as "history" with a plaque were the unmemorable speeches of two powerful men.

And that block, I think, explains why this museum is so necessary. Because that same object, reframed, put in context, tells us so

much more. As Americans, we rightfully passed on the tales of the giants who built this country, who led armies into battle, who waged seminal debates in the halls of Congress and the corridors of power. But too often, we ignored or forgot the stories of millions upon millions of others, who built this Nation just as surely, whose humble eloquence, whose calloused hands, whose steady drive helped to create cities, erect industries, build the arsenals of democracy.

And so this national museum helps to tell a richer and fuller story of who we are. It helps us better understand the lives, yes, of the President, but also the slave; the industrialist, but also the porter; the keeper of the status quo, but also of the activist seeking to overthrow that status quo; the teacher or the cook alongside the statesman. And by knowing this other story, we better understand ourselves and each other. It binds us together. It reaffirms that all of us are America; that African American history is not somehow separate from our larger American story, it's not the underside of the American story, it is central to the American story. That our glory derives not just from our most obvious triumphs, but how we've wrested triumph from tragedy, and how we've been able to remake ourselves, again and again and again, in accordance with our highest ideals.

"I, too, am America."

The great historian John Hope Franklin, who helped to get this museum started, once said, "Good history is a good foundation for a better present and future." He understood, the best history doesn't just sit behind a glass case; it helps us to understand what's outside the case. The best history helps us recognize the mistakes that we've made and the dark corners of the human spirit that we need to guard against. And yes, a clear-eyed view of history can make us uncomfortable, and it will shake us out of familiar narratives. But it is precisely because of that discomfort that we learn and grow and harness our collective power to make this Nation more perfect.

That's the American story that this museum tells: one of suffering and delight; one of fear, but also of hope; of wandering in the wilderness and then seeing out on the horizon a glimmer of the Promised Land.

It is in this embrace of truth, as best as we can know it, in the celebration of the entire American experience, where real patriotism lies. As President Bush just said, a great nation doesn't shy from the truth. It strengthens us. It emboldens us. It should fortify us. It is an act of patriotism to understand where we've been. And this museum tells the story of so many patriots.

Yes, African Americans have felt the cold weight of shackles and the stinging lash of the field whip. But we've also dared to run north and sing songs from Harriet Tubman's hymnal. We've buttoned up our Union Blues to join the fight for our freedom. We've railed against injustice for decade upon decade, a lifetime of struggle and progress and enlightenment that we see etched in Frederick Douglass's mighty, leonine gaze.

Yes, this museum tells a story of people who felt the indignity, the small and large humiliations of a "Whites Only" sign, or wept at the side of Emmett Till's coffin or fell to their knees on shards of stained glass outside a church where four little girls died. But it also tells the story of the Black and White youth sitting alongside each other, straight backed, so full of dignity on those lunch counter stools; the story of 6-year-old Ruby Bridges, pigtails, fresh pressed dress, walking that gauntlet to get to school; Tuskegee Airmen soaring the skies not just to beat a dictator, but to reaffirm the promise of our democracy and remind us that all of us are created equal.

This is the place to understand how protest and love of country don't merely coexist, but inform each other; how men can proudly win the gold for their country, but still insist on raising a black-gloved fist; how we can wear an "I Can't Breathe" T-shirt and still grieve for fallen police officers. Here's the America where the razor-sharp uniform of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff belongs alongside the cape of the Godfather of Soul. [*Laughter*] We have shown the world that we can float like butterflies and sting like bees; that we can rocket into space like Mae Jemi-

son, steal home like Jackie, rock like Jimi, stir the pot like Richard Pryor; or we can be sick and tired of being sick and tired, like Fannie Lou Hamer, and still "Rock Steady" like Aretha Franklin. [*Laughter*]

We are large, Walt Whitman told us, containing multitudes. We are large, containing multitudes. Full of contradictions. That's America. That's what makes us go. That's what makes us extraordinary. And as is true for America, so is true for the African American experience. We're not a burden on America or a stain on America or an object of pity or charity for America. We're America.

And that's what this museum explains: the fact that our stories have shaped every corner of our culture. The struggles for freedom that took place made our Constitution a real and living document, tested and shaped and deepened and made more profound its meaning for all people. The story told here doesn't just belong to Black Americans; it belongs to all Americans, for the African American experience has been shaped just as much by Europeans and Asians and Native Americans and Latinos. We have informed each other. We are polyglot, a stew.

Scripture promised that if we lift up the oppressed, then our light will rise in the darkness, and our night will become like the noonday. And the story contained in this museum makes those words prophecy. And that's what this day is about. That's what this museum is about. I, too, am America. It is a glorious story, the one that's told here. It is complicated and it is messy and it is full of contradictions, as all great stories are, as Shakespeare is, as Scripture is. And it's a story that perhaps needs to be told now more than ever.

A museum alone will not alleviate poverty in every inner city or every rural hamlet. It won't eliminate gun violence from all our neighborhoods or immediately ensure that justice is always colorblind. It won't wipe away every instance of discrimination in a job interview or a sentencing hearing or folks trying to rent an apartment. Those things are up to us, the decisions and choices we make. It requires speaking out and organizing and voting until our values are fully reflected in our laws and our policies and our communities.

But what this museum does show us is that even in the face of oppression, even in the face of unimaginable difficulty, America has moved forward. And so this museum provides context for the debates of our times. It illuminates them and gives us some sense of how they evolved and perhaps keeps them in proportion. Perhaps they can help a White visitor understand the pain and anger of demonstrators in places like Ferguson and Charlotte. But it can also help Black visitors appreciate the fact that not only is this younger generation carrying on traditions of the past, but within the White communities across the Nation, we see the sincerity of law enforcement officers and officials who, in fits and starts, are struggling to understand and are trying to do the right thing.

It reminds us that routine discrimination and Jim Crow aren't ancient history, it's just a blink in the eye of history. It was just yesterday. And so we should not be surprised that not all the healing is done. We shouldn't despair that it's not all solved. And knowing the larger story should instead remind us just how remarkable the changes that have taken place truly are—just in my lifetime—and thereby inspire us to further progress.

And so, hopefully, this museum can help us talk to each other. And more importantly, listen to each other. And most importantly, see each other. Black and White and Latino and Native American and Asian American—see how our stories are bound together, and bound together with women in America and workers in America and entrepreneurs in America and LGBT Americans. And for young people who didn't live through the struggles represented here, I hope you draw strength from the changes that have taken place. Come here and see the power of your own agency. See how young John Lewis was. [*Laughter*] These were children who transformed a nation in a blink of an eye. Young people, come here and see your ability to make your mark.

The very fact of this day does not prove that America is perfect, but it does validate the ideas of our founding, that this country born of

change, this country born of revolution, this country of we the people, this country can get better.

And that's why we celebrate, mindful that our work is not yet done; mindful that we are but on a way station on this common journey towards freedom. And how glorious it is that we enshrine it here, on some of our Nation's most hallowed ground; the same place where lives were once traded, but also where hundreds of thousands of Americans of all colors and creeds once marched. How joyful it is that this story take its rightful place alongside Jefferson, who declared our independence, and Washington, who made it real, and alongside Lincoln, who saved our Union, and the GIs who defended it; alongside a new monument to a King, gazing outward, summoning us towards that mountaintop. How righteous it is that we tell this story here.

For almost 8 years, I have been blessed with the extraordinary honor of serving you in this office. And time and again, I've flown low over this Mall on Marine One, often with Michelle and our daughters. And President Clinton, President Bush, Laura, they'll tell you, it is a incredible sight. We pass right across the Washington Monument; it feels like you can reach out and touch it. And at night, if you turn the other way, you don't just see the Lincoln Memorial; Old Abe is lit up, and you can see him, his spirit glowing from that building. And we don't have many trips left. But over the years, I have always been comforted as I've watched this museum rise from this earth into this remarkable tribute. Because I know that years from now, like all of you, Michelle and I will be able to come here to this museum, and not just bring our kids, but hopefully, our grandkids. I imagine holding a little hand of somebody and tell them the stories that are enshrined here.

And in the years that follow, they'll be able to do the same. And then we'll go to the Lincoln Memorial, and we'll take a view atop the Washington Monument. And together, we'll learn about ourselves, as Americans: our sufferings, our delights, and our triumphs. And we'll walk away better for it, better because we better grasp the truth. We'll walk away that much more in love with this country, the only place on Earth where this story could have unfolded.

It is a monument, no less than the others on this Mall, to the deep and abiding love for this country and the ideals upon which it is founded. For we, too, are America.

So enough talk. President Bush was timing me. [*Laughter*] He had the over-under at 25. [*Laughter*] Let us now open this museum to the world. Today we have with us a family that reflects the arc of our progress: the Bonner family, four generations in all, starting with gorgeous 7-year-old Christine and going up to gorgeous 99-year-old Ruth.

Now, Ruth's father, Elijah Odom, was born into servitude in Mississippi. He was born a slave. As a young boy, he ran, though, to his freedom. He lived through Reconstruction, and he lived through Jim Crow. But he went on to farm and graduate from medical school and gave life to the beautiful family that we see today, with a spirit reflected in beautiful Christine, free and equal in the laws of her country and in the eyes of God.

So, in a brief moment, their family will join us in ringing a bell from the First Baptist Church in Virginia, one of the oldest Black churches in America, founded under a grove of trees in 1776. And the sound of this bell will be echoed by others in houses of worship and town squares all across this country, an echo of the ringing of bells that signaled Emancipation more than a century and a half ago; the sound, and the anthem, of American freedom.

God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. on an outdoor stage. In his remarks, he referred to former President George W. Bush and former First Lady Laura Bush; Jill T. Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden; Calvin O. Butts III, president, State University of New York at Old Westbury, and pastor, Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York City; civil rights activist Ruby Bridges Hall; former Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, in his former capacity as Chairman of the Joint

Chiefs of Staff; former astronaut and physician Mae C. Jemison; musician Aretha Franklin; and Washington, DC, resident Ruth Odom Bonner and her great-granddaughter Christine.

Remarks During a Teleconference Call With Rabbis on the Observance of Rosh Hashanah

September 26, 2016

Well, thank you so much, Rabbi, for the warm introduction. *L'Shanah Tovah* to everybody. Thanks for taking time to join this call. I know it's a busy and important time. I couldn't be more grateful to the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the Rabbinical Assembly, the Rabbinical Council of America, and the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Assembly for cosponsoring this call. And special thanks to Rabbi Jonah Pesner and Barbara Weinstein from the Religious Action Center for coordinating today's conversation.

As Rabbi Matanky noted, Rosh Hashanah is a time for reflection, and I'm not exempt from that. So, looking back on the last 8 years, I'm both proud of what we've accomplished together, but also mindful of the work we have before us.

When it comes to the unshakeable commitment to Israel's security, we've taken a clear stand, and the recent signing of the memorandum of understanding constitutes the single largest pledge of military assistance in U.S. history to any country, totaling $38 billion over 10 years.

I made a commitment to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, and because of our principled diplomacy, every pathway to a nuclear weapon is now closed off. Iran has dismantled two-thirds of its installed centrifuges, shipped out 98 percent of its enriched uranium, rendered its plutonium reactor core unusable, and adopted the most comprehensive nuclear inspection ever.

On the global fight against anti-Semitism, we've worked in partnership with Israel and other countries to take a lead role in organizing the first ever U.N. General Assembly meeting to combat anti-Semitism last year.

And so, on these issues and many others we have worked incredibly closely with many of you, allocating millions in assistance for Holocaust survivors, and ensuring that the U.N. finally recognized Yom Kippur as an official holiday, and more broadly, working to rebuild a sinking economy, so that we've cut the unemployment rate by more than half, provided health care to 20 million people who didn't have it before, ramped up our production of clean energy, signed a historic Paris Agreement that, hopefully, will curb the accelerating speed at which our planet is warming and could threaten the future of our children and our grandchildren.

Of course, we've still got a lot of work to do: on the refugee crisis, on criminal justice reform, reducing violence, and creating a political culture in this country that's a little more functional. But a new year brings new hope, and the community represented on this phone call has always known what it means to stand up for the less fortunate, the stranger, the immigrant, the refugee. And so I'm confident that we can stand together and make sure that as we pass the baton to the next administration that we're going to be able to build on the enormous progress that we've already made.

And I just want to reemphasize how grateful I am to all of you, not just for the work that the various associations and assemblies and congregations have had on policy issues, but just as importantly, or more importantly, the work that you do in your respective communities every single day to help those in need and to help lift up the values that helped to build this country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:59 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Leonard Matanky, honorary president, Rabbinical Council of America; and Jonah Dov Pesner, director, and Barbara Weinstein, associate director, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the White House Tribal Nations Conference
September 26, 2016

The President. Hello, everybody. Thank you. Thank you. Well, welcome to the Eighth White House Tribal Nations Conference. And what a amazing honor, and what a kind gesture for the honor song and the blanket and the hat. I have to say that I'm very glad that you also have a blanket for Michelle so she doesn't steal mine. [*Laughter*] She would too. I'm just saying. [*Laughter*] But that was very moving and is a reminder of the great friendships that we've developed over the last 8 years.

I have a couple of people here who I want to acknowledge for their longstanding commitment to Indian Country: Sally Jewell, our Secretary of the Interior; Brian Cladoosby, president of the National Congress of American Indians. We're honored to have here Thomas Begay, one of the last surviving Navajo Code Talkers. And we have some just amazing young people here that I had a chance to meet earlier, including those who are participating in Generation Indigenous, so please give our young people a big round of applause. We're so proud of them.

So today the most important thing I want to say is thank you. After almost 8 years as your President, I have been so privileged to learn from you and spend time with many of you while visiting more tribal communities than any other President. Standing Rock Sioux Tribe here? Choctaw Nation? Alaska Natives? My trips to your nations and communities are days that I will never forget. We—Michelle and I—still talk about hosting those remarkable young people from Standing Rock Sioux Nation in the White House and taking them out for pizza. [*Laughter*] My staff still talks about all the wonderful people in Kotzebue, Alaska, who tried to—they tried to teach them Iñupiaq and tried to stuff them full of meat at Caribou fest. [*Laughter*] And my brothers at Crow Nation, brothers and sisters here, I may be an adopted son of the Crow Nation, but I try not to play favorites. [*Laughter*] Because I pledged to all of you when I first ran for President that I'd be a partner with all of you in the spirit of a true nation-to-nation relationship, to give all our children the future they deserve.

So we began by elevating Native American Affairs within the White House and across the Federal Government. The American people are served by so many dedicated, talented Native Americans like Larry Roberts, our Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs. Morgan Rodman, our Executive Director of the White House Council on Native American Affairs. Karen Diver and Tracy Goodluck, our Native American Affairs team at the White House. That's just a few. And by creating the White House Council of Native American Affairs, we created a permanent institution with a long-term, Cabinet-level focus on Indian Country, one that involves you through the decisionmaking process.

So I've been proud of what we've been able to do together. We haven't solved every issue. We haven't righted every wrong. But together, we've made significant progress in almost every area.

Together, we've permanently protected sacred lands for future generations. We've restored more than 428,000 acres of tribal homelands to their original owners. By signing the historic *Cobell* settlement into law, we established the Land Buy-Back Program, a $1.9 billion fund to consolidate individual Indian lands and restore them to Indian—tribal trusts.

Together, we've strengthened your sovereignty, reauthorized the Violence Against Women Act so that tribes can prosecute those who commit domestic violence against women in Indian Country, whether they're Native American or not. We've worked to ensure your right to equal justice under the law and given more power to tribal courts and police. I know that many of you who have come together across tribes and across the country to support the community at Standing Rock. And together, you're making your voices heard.

And in a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect, we've made a lot of progress for Indian Country over the past 8 years. And this mo-

ment highlights why it's so important that we redouble our efforts to make sure that every Federal agency truly consults and listens and works with you, sovereign to sovereign.

Together, we've worked to create jobs and expand opportunity by investing in clean energy projects and infrastructure and high-speed Internet that connects your communities to the broader economy. We've worked to secure quality, affordable health care for more people in Indian Country through the Affordable Care Act, including the permanent reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act.

We've invested in job training and tribal colleges and universities, and together, we've worked to return control of Indian education to tribal nations so that as we prepare our young people for the demands of a global economy, we're also teaching them in their own language and their own culture. Because we believe that all our native youth deserve a future as bright as any American child, without having to leave the land of their fathers and mothers. That's what's driven our work.

And through Generation Indigenous, we've worked to connect more of our young people to each other, in one big network of opportunity across the country. So that's just some of the progress we've made together. And we've got to keep fighting to the finish line. Even after my time in this office comes to an end, I'm going to be standing alongside you because I believe that, yes, our progress depends in part on who sits in the Oval Office, and whether they're setting the right priorities, but lasting progress depends on all of us, not just who the President is. It depends on making the decisions that are good and right and just and our willingness to organize and mobilize and keep pushing for opportunity.

And I'm optimistic that you will continue on the path forward that we've set. I'm optimistic that our progress will continue. The young people who I've met on this journey, more than anything else, who make me feel optimistic: the students who sang us the Lakota national anthem and told us about all the obstacles they've overcome and shared with us their dreams for the future; the students at the middle school in Dillingham, Alaska, who taught me a traditional Yup'ik dance.

Audience member. Show us! [*Laughter*]

The President. Well, I can only do it when they're around—[*laughter*]—because I'm basically just watching them. It—they were very patient with me. [*Laughter*]

And it's a young woman named Lindsay Early of the Comanche Nation in Oklahoma, who earlier this year wrote me a letter to tell me she was actually at a campaign speech I gave in Texas way back in 2008, where I pledged that I'd do my best to represent Native Americans. And Lindsay said in her letter that when she heard my pledge to her people, in the middle of my speech, she screamed as loud as she could from the balcony. And look, if you're President and somebody screams, that can mean many things, usually. [*Laughter*] Sometimes, it's good; sometimes, it's not so good. But according to Lindsay, it was good. And I answered back, I hear you girls, and when I'm elected, I won't forget you.

Well, 8 years later, Lindsay's gone on to accomplish some pretty remarkable things. She was raised by a single mom, like me, and didn't have a lot of money or obvious advantages in life, but she earned a scholarship and graduated from college; moved back home to help her mom care for her 92-year-old grandmother. She took a job developing a new assisted-living facility, owned and operated by the Comanche Nation. And after that opened, she joined Teach For America. And now she teaches kindergarteners in her community by day, and Native America history to students at a tribal college at night.

So this is a young woman who knows the meaning of giving back. And her whole life, people told her how smart she was and that someday she'd go off into the world and make big changes. But in school, she came to a realization, and here's what she said: "It was not 'going off' that would make Indian Country better, but returning with education and with the insight education brings. . . . My students have a sense of pride in them about who they are as indigenous individuals. . . . More than anything, they realize they are in control of

their own destinies, and that's such a powerful thing to experience."

So you listen to somebody like Lindsay, who understands she's in charge of her own destiny and is now able to transmit that to the next generation, and how can you not be optimistic about this country's future? How can you not be optimistic about the future of all of the nations represented here?

And, Lindsay, I want you to know that I heard you. I didn't forget you. And I want everybody in this auditorium and all the folks back home in your respective communities to know that this whole time, I've heard you. I have seen you. And I hope I've done right by you. And I hope I've set a direction that others will follow.

I hope I've set a direction that others then follow, and I hope I've given more of our young people, like Lindsay and her students, that sense of hope and that sense of what an incredible gift they are to this country and that they're in control of their own destinies and that they're going to help shape the future of the United States of America.

Thank you all for your partnership. Thank you for this journey.

I'll see you on the other side. May God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:52 p.m. in the Great Hall at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Special Assistant to the President for Native American Affairs Karen R. Diver; Senior Associate Director of Public Engagement and Intergovernmental Affairs Tracy L. Canard Goodluck; and Melissa P. Gordon, mother of Lindsay M. Early, adjunct professor, Comanche Nation College.

Statement on the Death of Arnold Palmer
September 26, 2016

With his homemade swing and homespun charm, Arnold Palmer had swagger before we had a name for it. From a humble start working at the local club in his beloved Latrobe, Pennsylvania, to superstardom as the face of golf around the globe, Arnold was the American Dream come to life.

Along the way he racked up win after win, but it wasn't his success that made him King. Arnold's freewheeling, fearless approach to the game inspired a generation of golfers and, for the first time on TV, enthralled an audience across the world. Sure, we liked that he won seven majors, but we loved that he went for it when he probably should have laid up.

That spirit extended beyond the links where he gave freely of himself and poured everything he had into everything he did: from building hospitals to personally responding to countless letters from his fans. And he did it all with a grin that hinted maybe he had one more shot up his sleeve.

Today Michelle and I stand with Arnie's Army in saluting the King.

Statement on the Death of Former President Shimon Peres of Israel
September 27, 2016

There are few people who we share this world with who change the course of human history, not just through their role in human events, but because they expand our moral imagination and force us to expect more of ourselves. My friend Shimon was one of those people.

Shimon Peres once said that, "I learned that public service is a privilege that must be based on moral foundations." Tonight Michelle and I join people across Israel, the United States, and around the world in honoring the extraordinary life of our dear friend Shimon Peres, a founding father of the State of Israel and a statesman whose commitment to Israel's security and pursuit of peace was rooted in his own unshakeable moral foundation and unflagging optimism.

I will always be grateful that I was able to call Shimon my friend. I first visited him in Jerusalem when I was a Senator, and when I asked for his advice, he told me that while people often say that the future belongs to the young, it's the present that really belongs to the young. "Leave the future to me," he said, "I have time." And he was right. Whether it was during our conversations in the Oval Office, walking together through Yad Vashem, or when I presented him with America's highest civilian honor, the Medal of Freedom, Shimon always looked to the future. He was guided by a vision of the human dignity and progress that he knew people of good will could advance together. He brought young people from around the world together because he knew they could carry us closer to our ideals of justice and equality.

Shimon was the essence of Israel itself: the courage of Israel's fight for independence, the optimism he shared with his wife Sonya as they helped make the desert bloom, and the perseverance that led him to serve his nation in virtually every position in Government across the entire life of the State of Israel. As Americans, we are in his debt because, having worked with every U.S. President since John F. Kennedy, no one did more over so many years as Shimon Peres to build the alliance between our two countries, an unbreakable alliance that today is closer and stronger than it has ever been.

Perhaps because he had seen Israel surmount overwhelming odds, Shimon never gave up on the possibility of peace between Israelis, Palestinians, and Israel's neighbors, not even after the heartbreak of the night in Tel Aviv that took Yitzhak Rabin. "Dear friends," he told us during my visit to Israel 3 years ago, "after everything I have seen in my life, I earned the right to believe that peace is attainable." Tonight I can think of no greater tribute to his life than to renew our commitment to the peace that we know is possible. Our thoughts are with his children Tzvia, Yoni, and Chemi, their families, and all who loved and admired Shimon Peres, of blessed memory.

A light has gone out, but the hope he gave us will burn forever. Shimon Peres was a soldier for Israel, for the Jewish people, for justice, for peace, and for the belief that we can be true to our best selves, to the very end of our time on Earth, and in the legacy that we leave to others. For the gift of his friendship and the example of his leadership, *todah rabah,* Shimon.

NOTE: The statement referred to Tzvia Walden and Yoni and Nehemia "Chemi" Peres, children of President Peres. The related proclamation of September 28 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Honoring the 2015 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Champion
September 28, 2016

The President. Please have a seat. It's not that formal around here. [*Laughter*] How you doing? Well, welcome to the White House, everybody. And give it up for NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Champion Kyle Busch. [*Applause*] Hey!

We also are happy to welcome here Kyle's wonderful wife Samantha, who I just learned is from the Chicago area, so she and I, we've got a little bond going here. [*Laughter*] We've got some Members of Congress here who are big NASCAR fans. We've got NASCAR CEO Brian France and his beautiful family, who—they keep on growing. [*Laughter*] And Dave Alpern, president of Joe Gibbs Racing; and Crew Chief Adam Stevens. Give them all a big round of applause.

Now, as you may be aware, I host a lot of teams from other sports; they all call themselves national champions or world champions. But I've got to hand it to the Number 18 team, who have given themselves the title of "Galaxy Champs." [*Laughter*] That's a first. And I've put in a call to NASA to check to see whether this is, in fact, accurate. [*Laughter*]

Kyle, I hear your ride is outside. Most years, when NASCAR comes to town, I make a joke about looking at the car full of longing and feeling kind of wistful and trying to get Secret Service to let me take a spin. [*Laughter*] But this year's different. In a few months, I can actually do anything I want. [*Laughter*] So, Kyle, we're going to talk. [*Laughter*]

NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Champion Kyle T. Busch. You got it.

The President. I'm not sure, though, Michelle is going to let me drive with a car with a whole bunch of M&M's on them. [*Laughter*] She may want carrots or something. [*Laughter*] Actually, we have White House M&M's here, so those of you who have sampled them, they are good old-fashioned M&M's. [*Laughter*]

Now, it's 2016. I think there were some people who thought we were going to see a Bush back here in the White House this year. [*Laughter*] But they didn't know it was going to be Kyle—[*laughter*]—especially after he broke his leg and his foot at Daytona and missed the first three months of the season.

But he hunkered down, displaying the same determination in rehab that he's known for on the track. He'll be the first to say he could not have done it alone. Obviously, from Samantha's support, to everyone on the Number 18 team who held things down while he got better, the people in Kyle's life kept him driving forward.

It helps, by the way, being young. I just want to point out. [*Laughter*] You know? You heal a little faster. When you're 55, things don't happen that quick. [*Laughter*]

So he ended up being able to return a week early, just a few days before their beautiful, young son Brexton was born. But he still only had a fraction of the season to qualify for the Chase, and that's something to do in a full season.

Luckily, as most folks will attest, Kyle does not lack confidence, apparently. So, while he has said that rehabbing was one of the hardest things he's ever done, winning on the racetrack wasn't. And together, he and the Number 18 team won five times on their way to the Cup, including at the Homestead-Miami Speedway, where Kyle took the lead with just seven laps to go and brought home the championship.

So it was another great season: Kyle's first career Sprint Cup title. But for Kyle, it's not just about what he does on the track, it's what he does off the track. Kyle and Samantha are working hard to make a difference for folks all across the country, from donating wedding gowns to military brides to helping couples afford fertility treatment, to covering expenses for women who are battling breast cancer.

And that goes with the kind of service that we're seeing from the entire NASCAR family. Just a few weeks ago, NASCAR lost its matriarch, Betty Jane France. And she was the guiding light of the sport's community's efforts, including creating the Speediatrics program, which has given more than half a million kids the opportunity to access state-of-the-art medical equipment.

In all, over the past decade, NASCAR has given $25 million dollars to charitable causes that have helped more than a million kids. And last year, through a tremendous partnership with the VA, they helped more than 5,300 veterans, servicemembers, and their families access the benefits that they have earned.

So, all together, it's a legacy of service that honors Betty Jane and stays true to the belief that in serving each other, we make the country better, and we help every member of the American family. And I know that Kyle, Samantha, and others want to continue that legacy.

So, for one last time, let's give a big round of applause for Kyle, his family, Joe Gibbs Racing, and the entire Number 18 team. What do we got here? Here, come on. You get to——

Mr. Busch. I appreciate that. This here is a helmet, one of the few that I have during the season and I raced with in order to bring to you and give a gift on behalf of all of us at Joe Gibbs Racing.

The President. That's a good-looking helmet.

Mr. Busch. So that's a real one there.

The President. I really like that helmet now.

Mr. Busch. Yes? See, when you go on your adventure, you could use that one.

The President. I'm going to use this one. Tell me the truth, what are you pumping in through here, though? [*Laughter*]

Mr. Busch. Some really good stuff. [*Laughter*] Yes, sir.

The President. All right. Come on, let's knock the podium, and let's take a good picture. Come on, everybody.

Mr. Busch. You got it. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:18 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Gov. John E. "Jeb" Bush of Florida, in his former capacity as a Presidential candidate.

Remarks to United States Troops at Fort Lee, Virginia
September 28, 2016

The President. Hello, everybody! Hello, Fort Lee! Well, it is wonderful to see all of you. Thank you.

Audience member. Thank you!

The President. Thank you! Thank you! I want to thank your outstanding leadership team for welcoming me, including Major General Darrell Williams, Lieutenant General Wendy Masiello, Colonel Adam Butler, and Command Sergeant Major Nathaniel Bartee.

I know this is the proud home of the Army Combined Arms Support Command. But I know we've got other services represented here. Navy. [*Applause*] Marines. [*Applause*] Air Force. [*Applause*] We've got our outstanding DOD civilians in the house. And then, of course, we've got a whole lot of Army. [*Applause*]

Now, I'm not here to give a big speech.

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. No, no. [*Laughter*] The main thing I wanted to do was just come by, shake some hands. As you know, I had a town hall with CNN and some of our extraordinary troops, our veterans, our military families. We had an important discussion about how our Nation has to uphold its obligations to you and your families. You serve us with such distinction every single day, I want to make sure we're doing right by you. And so you can watch it tonight on CNN or you can watch whatever else is on. [*Laughter*]

But you guys showed extraordinary hospitality and made our visit a success, so I just want to say thank you.

Audience member. Thank you!

The President. You know, here at this post, you are part of a tradition of service that stretches back nearly a hundred years. Doughboys marched off to World War I from this facility. You trained our soldiers for World War II, Korea, Vietnam, every conflict since. So, as you prepare to celebrate your centennial next year, I'm just going to jump the gun and go ahead and say, Fort Lee, happy 100th birthday.

And this is also a chance for me to pay tribute to the vital work that you're doing every single day. You don't always get the glory, but the fact is, America's Army and America's military could not project around the world, would not be the very best in the world if it were not for the best sustainment personnel in the world. There's an old saying, "Amateurs talk about tactics, professionals talk about logistics."

So today we salute all the logistics personnel. You make sure our troops get what they need: the right amount and the right place at the right time. We salute the Transportation Corps, keeping our supply lines open and, at times, risking your lives doing it. We salute the folks who handle the ordnance, a line of work where you need some steady hands—don't drop nothing. [*Laughter*] We salute all the quartermasters, including our Army cooks. I know sometimes military food gets a bad rap, but here at Fort Lee, the cooks train to be world class. Some are so good—like Army Staff Sergeant Justin Gonzalez and Navy Master Chief Derrick Davenport—that we made them part of the Presidential Food Service. And you know we've got good food in the White House. [*Laughter*] And that's because we've got outstanding talent that's been trained here.

And this brings me to the main message I want to deliver. I've now served as your President for almost 8 years. And it gets me and Michelle reflecting on some of the unforgettable moments that we've experienced. And we've done a lot of amazing stuff, but I will tell you that of all the privileges of this office, there's been no greater privilege, no greater honor than serving as the Commander in Chief of the finest military in the history of the world.

And what makes you best, it's not just the incredible platforms that give us our military superiority, although we've got some pretty impressive equipment on display right here. It's not the sophisticated technologies that make us the most advanced military. We have the strongest military because we've got the best people. Because of your spirit, because of your character, because of your patriotism. So you inspire me and Michelle and the American people. And not just as Commander in Chief, but as an American citizen, I just want to say thank you from the bottom of my heart. Thank you for the great work you do.

Thanks for your patriotism. Many of you had a lot of options, and you chose a career that's not always the most comfortable, certainly is not always the most lucrative. But you've dedicated yourself to something bigger than yourself. You chose a life of service. You stepped forward. You volunteered, and most of you volunteered in a time of war. You raised your hand, and you took an oath to defend and protect the country that you love.

And so I want to thank you for your devotion. In these 15 years since 9/11, our Nation has asked a lot of this generation. Among you are proud veterans of Afghanistan and Iraq. Many of you have served multiple tours. You've done your duty, again and again. You've helped deal deadly blows to those who would threaten us. You've helped prevent attacks and threats to our homeland. You're helping us to destroy ISIL, and we will destroy them. You're keeping us safe. You've earned your place among the greatest of generations.

Now, I believe that America's commitment now to our troops and our veterans is a sacred covenant that we have to keep. There's no more solemn request than to ask somebody to risk their lives on your behalf. And if they do that, that's a covenant. Both sides have responsibilities. You took an oath to defend us; the rest of us need to fulfill our oath to take care of you and your families—especially our Gold Star families—and that means using our military wisely. It means not rushing into war, but doing what's necessary to keep us safe. It means not playing politics with war. It means giving you the resources and the support that you need to succeed. It means when you come home, you and your families are getting the education and the benefits that you have earned.

So we've got obligations to you. And this is not just a job for government. As you know, Michelle and Dr. Jill Biden have done a great job with Joining Forces to make sure that everybody is doing something to support our veterans and our military families. And that's something that Michelle and I, we've pledged we're going to continue even after we leave office.

And finally, I want to thank you for setting a good example for everybody else. Sometimes, especially during election season, the country seems divided. But the truth of the matter is, when you look out at this group of members of our military, but it's true on every base around the world, you're unified in your mission. You do your job. You look out for each other. You lift each other up. You leave nobody behind. And you remind us, we're one team, and we're one people, and we're one Nation, indivisible with liberty and justice for all. That's what you stand for. So thank you for your sacrifice, but also thank you for reminding the rest of the country what patriotism really means.

God bless you. God bless the United States of America. Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:12 p.m. in the Hi-Bay at the Air Force Transportation Management School. In his remarks, he referred to Maj. Gen. Darrell K. Williams, USA, commanding general, and CSM Nathaniel J. Bartee, Sr., USA, command sergeant major, Combined Arms Support Command; Lt. Gen. Wendy M. Masiello, USAF, Director, Defense

Contract Management Agency; Col. Adam W. Butler, USA, commander, U.S. Army Garrison, Fort Lee; and Jill T. Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Memorandum on Deferred Enforced Departure for Liberians
September 28, 2016

Memorandum for the Secretary of Homeland Security

Subject: Deferred Enforced Departure for Liberians

Since 1991, the United States has provided safe haven for Liberians who were forced to flee their country as a result of armed conflict and widespread civil strife, in part through the grant of Temporary Protected Status (TPS). The armed conflict ended in 2003, and TPS ended effective October 1, 2007. President Bush then deferred the enforced departure of those Liberians originally granted TPS. I extended that grant of Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) to September 30, 2016. I have determined that there are compelling foreign policy reasons to again extend DED to those Liberians presently residing in the United States under the existing grant of DED.

Pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct the foreign relations of the United States, I have determined that it is in the foreign policy interest of the United States to defer for 18 months the removal of any Liberian national, or person without nationality who last habitually resided in Liberia, who is present in the United States and who is under a grant of DED as of September 30, 2011. The grant of DED only applies to an individual who has continuously resided in the United States since October 1, 2002, except for Liberian nationals, or persons without nationality who last habitually resided in Liberia:

(1) who are ineligible for TPS for the reasons provided in section 244(c)(2)(B) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. 1254a(c)(2)(B);
(2) whose removal you determine is in the interest of the United States;
(3) whose presence or activities in the United States the Secretary of State has reasonable grounds to believe would have potentially serious adverse foreign policy consequences for the United States;
(4) who have voluntarily returned to Liberia or their country of last habitual residence outside the United States;
(5) who were deported, excluded, or removed prior to the date of this memorandum; or
(6) who are subject to extradition.

Accordingly, I direct you to take the necessary steps to implement for eligible Liberians:

(1) a deferral of enforced departure from the United States for 18 months from October 1, 2016; and
(2) authorization for employment for 18 months from October 1, 2016.

BARACK OBAMA

Remarks Honoring the 2016 United States Olympic and Paralympic Teams
September 29, 2016

The President. Hello, everybody! Welcome to the White House! Let's first give it up for the inspiring U.S. Paralympic Team! And give it up for the winners of the most medals by far, the 2016 Rio Olympics Team U.S.A.!

Now, first of all, I want you to know that I was going to do, like, a floor routine on the way out with Simone. [*Laughter*] But we decided it was a little too crowded and it would be——

The First Lady. And he can't touch his toes.

The President. And I can't touch my toes. [*Laughter*] So we scrapped that idea. You are the last team of Olympians and Paralympians that we will have the honor of welcoming to the White House.

The First Lady. We, us.

The President. But the story of this year's Team U.S.A. is all about firsts. Our Olympians came in first so many times more than anybody else. It wasn't even close: 46 golds. Not to brag, but 46 golds. You made the U.S. the first country in 40 years to top the medal chart in every category. And it was a feat built one unprecedented accomplishment at a time.

So, for example, only one American woman has ever won gold on the vault. Only one American has won four golds in gymnastics in a single Game. That would be this young lady, Simone Biles. Only one American woman has ever won gold in the shot put. That's Michelle Carter. Only one African American woman has ever won a swimming gold. That would be Simone Manuel. Only one American boxer, male or female, has ever won back-to-back Olympic golds: Claressa Shields. Only one cyclist has ever won three golds in the same event, America's Kristin Armstrong, who did it in the driving rain one day before her 43d birthday. Only one female Olympian has ever medaled at six straight Games. That would be America's Kim Rhode. Only one female track-and-field athlete has ever won six golds, and that would be America's Allyson Felix.

There's only one country ever to sweep every medal in the women's 100-meter hurdles, and that would be the United States of America. Give it up for Brianna and Nia and Kristi for the great work they did.

And then there's this young woman named Katie Ledecky. Katie's back there somewhere. There she is. [*Laughter*] I was nervous that she was going to ask me to, like, hold all her medals while I was speaking or something because—[*laughter*]. So she obliterates her own records in the 400 and the 800 freestyle, lapped the field in the 800. When you were watching on TV—you all see it on TV? Like there's nobody else in the pool? [*Laughter*] Crazy.

And then there are some firsts that show the world America's greatness doesn't come only from high scores or fast times, but from our diversity and our tolerance and our open hearts. This summer's fencer, Ibtihaj Muhammad, became the first American female athlete to compete in the Olympic Games in a hijab. And that's important too, because one of the wonderful things we love when we see our Olympians is, everybody is from all kinds of different backgrounds and shapes and sizes, although all very good looking. [*Laughter*]

The First Lady. Yes!

The President. Just exuding health. You know, they're—like, everybody's teeth is really white and their eyes are really shiny. [*Laughter*]

The First Lady. Fruits and vegetables! [*Laughter*]

The President. Fruits and vegetables.

So all this applies to the entire team, but I—but you will notice that there was a preponderance of women that I was mentioning here.

Audience member. Yes!

The President. One of the reasons our country is so proud of this year's Team U.S.A. is, 2016 belonged to America's women Olympians. I mean, you all crushed it.

We had more women competing in these Games than any nation ever. Our women alone won more golds than most countries did. Our women's 61 medals—most ever by any women's team—breaking the record set by, of course, Team U.S.A. 4 years ago. [*Laughter*] And as the father of two young women, for

them to have that example of health and drive and competition and persistence and strength, it makes me really proud.

The First Lady. Yes!

The President. So thank you, all the great jobs that you guys did.

Now, this year's summer Olympians gave us enough milestones and moments to last the next 4 years. Michael Phelps became the greatest Olympian of all time, broke a 2,000-year record for the most individual Olympic titles. If you're breaking, like, a 2,000-year record, that's pretty impressive. [*Laughter*] You know what I mean? If they've got to go back to the Greeks, that's an impressive record. [*Laughter*]

Our men and women's basketball teams continue to dominate the world. Sam Kendricks, a U.S. Army reservist and pole vaulter, somehow stopped himself midsprint and stood at attention when he heard the national anthem playing on the other side of the stadium. Thank you, Sam. And then, right after Will Claye won a silver in the triple jump, he jumped right into the stands to ask his girlfriend, fellow Olympian Queen Harrison, to marry him. [*Laughter*] So there was all kinds of stuff going on here. [*Laughter*]

Of course, we continue to be inspired by our Paralympians like Allysa Seely. Her doctors once said she might not walk again. Then she went out and won a triathlon. Sorry, doctors. Brad Snyder, Navy veteran, lost his eyesight to an IED in Afghanistan, went out and won three golds in the pool. Sergeant Elizabeth Marks, wounded in Iraq, still serves on Active Duty in our Army, does not hide her scars, just goes out and wins gold in the 100-meter breaststroke. That's what she does.

And then we're in awe of American athletes like Abbey D'Agostino who have showed that the Olympics are about more than just setting records. It's about sportsmanship and character. Some of you saw, when Abbey collided on the track with another running—runner, tearing her ACL. Abbey popped up, reached out her hands to her competitor and said, "Get up, we have to finish this race." We have to finish this race. And that's a remarkable sentiment in the middle of an individual event. But that's exactly what the Olympic spirit and the American spirit should be all about.

Now—so I could talk about this forever, but if I keep on going longer, I'm going to get, like, "Phelps Face" from you guys. You're going to be, like—[*laughter*]—you're going to be hungry. You want to get this—get out of here. [*Laughter*] So let me just say how proud all of you made, not just Michelle and me, but every American. And it inspires us to do what we do that much harder.

We admire your athleticism, but we also admire your character and your stick-to-it-ness. We know you don't do this for the money or the fame. [*Laughter*] You know. So many of you, you're holding down a full-time job, or you're going to school at the same time, and then you're trying to find time for your families, contribute to causes. Many of you have been involved on—in things like "It's On Us" and "Let's Move!" And you're doing this just with endless hours of training, and somehow, you make it look easy.

So remember that you know, when somebody is watching you for the first time and they see how hard you work and what you accomplish, and they feel inspired. They feel like they can take any challenge on. What you do has ripples all across the country. Imagine what it means for a young girl or a young boy who sees somebody who looks like them doing something and being the best at what they do.

And that's one of the most extraordinary things about our Olympic team. There's no kid in America who can't look at our Olympic team and see themselves somewhere. That's part of the reason why we're successful, because we gather talent from every corner of the globe. And through the years of people arriving—whether it's in Ellis Island or Angel Island or coming over the Rio Grande; some cases, coming not of their own accord—we've become something more than just the sum of our parts. We've become Americans together. And there's something special about that: all races, all faiths, all traditions, all orientations, all marching together under that same proud flag. Not bound by a creed or a color, but by our devotion to an enduring set of ideals: That we're

all created equal, that we can think and worship and love as we please, and that we can pursue our own version of happiness.

That's a great gift. That's what makes us strong. And I want to, as a consequence, take a minute to thank some people who paved the way to create that sense that we're in this together. We're honored to have here the legendary Tommie Smith and John Carlos here today. Where are they? [*Applause*] Proud of them. Their powerful silent protest in the 1968 Games was controversial, but it woke folks up and created greater opportunity for those that followed. And they're now in the brand new Museum of African American History and Culture. You can see their cleats. And near their statue hangs the cleats of the great Jesse Owens, what he wore in the 1936 Games, so that every American can have a sense of the courage that he displayed.

But it wasn't just Jesse. It was other African American athletes in the middle of Nazi Germany under the gaze of Adolf Hitler that put a lie to notions of racial superiority—whupped them—[*laughter*]—and taught them a thing or two about democracy and taught them a thing or two about the American character. So we're honored to have many of their families here today. We want to acknowledge them as well.

In fact, Jesse Owens once said, "The purpose of the Olympics is to do your best." And Michelle, Joe, and I want to thank all of you for not just doing your best but inspiring our best. Thanks for leading by example, not just every 4 years or when the cameras are on, but every single day.

So congratulations. God bless you. God bless the United States of America. Hey!

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:50 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Kimberly S. Rhode, skeet shooter, Briana Rollins, Nia Ali, and Kristi Castlin, hurdlers, and Michael F. Phelps II, swimmer, 2016 U.S. Olympic Team; Queen Quedith Harrison, sprinter and hurdler, 2008 U.S. Olympic Team; Nikki Hamblin, distance runner, New Zealand's 2016 Olympic Team, who was involved in a collision during the women's 5,000-meter qualifying race; Thomas C. Smith and John W. Carlos, sprinters, 1968 U.S. Olympic Team, who raised their clenched fists on the victory podium in solidarity with civil rights activists and liberation movements worldwide; and Vice President Joe Biden.

Joint Statement—2016 United States-India Cyber Dialogue
September 29, 2016

The Governments of the United States and India held the Fifth U.S.-India Cyber Dialogue in New Delhi on September 28, 2016.

The U.S.-India Cyber Dialogue reflects our nations' broad engagement and long-standing cooperation on important bilateral and global issues. The Cyber Dialogue is a forum for implementing the Framework for the India-U.S. Cyber Relationship, in particular exchanging and discussing international cyber policies, comparing national cyber strategies, enhancing our efforts to combat cybercrime, and fostering capacity building and R&D, thus promoting cybersecurity and the digital economy.

The U.S.-India Cyber Dialogue is deepening bilateral cooperation on a wide range of cyber issues and strengthening the U.S.-India strategic partnership by:

- Exchanging information on cyber threats and issues of mutual concern, and discussing possible cooperative measures;
- Promoting bilateral cooperation on law enforcement and cybercrime issues;
- Creating a mechanism for cooperation, including setting up appropriate subgroups;
- Affirming common objectives in international cyber fora, especially the application of international law to state behavior in cyberspace, the affirmation of norms of responsible state behavior, and the de-

velopment of practical confidence-building measures;

- Confirming support for the preservation of openness and interoperability, enhanced by the multi-stakeholder system of Internet governance; and,
- Coordinating cyber capacity-building efforts, including testing and standards with respect to cybersecurity.

The whole-of-government Cyber Dialogue, fifth in the series, was led by the U.S. National Security Council Senior Director for Cyber Policy Samir Jain and by Shri Santosh Jha, Joint Secretary for Policy Planning and Global Cyber Issues, Ministry of External Affairs. The Department of State Coordinator for Cyber Issues Christopher Painter and the National Security Council Secretariat Joint Secretary Shri Abhimanyu Ghosh co-hosted the Dialogue. The U.S. government interagency delegation included representatives from the Departments of State, Homeland Security, and Commerce, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The Indian government was represented by Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Ministry of Communication, Ministry of Home Affairs, Computer Emergency Response Team, National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre, Central Bureau of Investigation and Defence Research & Development Organisation.

The two countries decided to hold the next round of the Cyber Dialogue in Washington in 2017.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Designating Funds for Overseas Contingency Operations and Global Counterterrorism
September 29, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with section 401 of division A and section 114(c) of division C of the Continuing Appropriations and Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017, and Zika Response and Preparedness Act (the "Act"), I hereby designate for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism all funding (including the rescission of funds) and contributions from foreign governments so designated by the Congress in the Act pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended, as outlined in the enclosed list of accounts.

The details of this action are set forth in the enclosed memorandum from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Designating Emergency Funding for Zika Response Efforts
September 29, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with section 5 of the Continuing Appropriations and Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017, and Zika Response and Preparedness Act, I hereby designate as emergency requirements all funding (including the

rescission of funds) so designated by the Congress in the Act pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended, as outlined in the enclosed list of accounts.

The details of this action are set forth in the enclosed memorandum from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate.

Remarks at a Memorial Service for Former President Shimon Peres of Israel in Jerusalem

September 30, 2016

Tzvia, Yoni, Chemi, and generations of the Peres family; President Rivlin; Prime Minister Netanyahu; members of the Israeli Government and the Knesset; heads of state and government; and guests from around the world, including President Abbas, whose presence here is a gesture and a reminder of the unfinished business of peace; to the people of Israel: I could not be more honored to be in Jerusalem to say farewell to my friend Shimon Peres, who showed us that justice and hope are at the heart of the Zionist idea.

A free life, in a homeland regained. A secure life, in a nation that can defend itself, by itself. A full life, in friendship with nations who can be counted on as allies, always. A bountiful life, driven by the simple pleasures of family and by big dreams. This was Shimon Peres's life. This is the State of Israel. This is the story of the Jewish people over the last century, and it was made possible by a founding generation that counts Shimon as one of its own.

Shimon once said that, "The message of the Jewish people to mankind is that faith and moral vision can triumph over all adversity." For Shimon, that moral vision was rooted in an honest reckoning of the world as it is. Born in the shtetl, he said he felt "surrounded by a sea of thick and threatening forests." When his family got the chance to go to Palestine, his beloved grandfather's parting words were simple: "Shimon, stay a Jew." Propelled with that faith, he found his home. He found his purpose. He found his life's work. But he was still a teenager when his grandfather was burned alive by the Nazis in the town where Shimon was born. The synagogue in which he prayed became an inferno. The railroad tracks that had carried him toward the Promised Land also delivered so many of his people to death camps.

And so, from an early age, Shimon bore witness to the cruelty that human beings could inflict on each other, the ways that one group of people could dehumanize another; the particular madness of anti-Semitism, which has run like a stain through history. That understanding of man's ever-present sinfulness would steel him against hardship and make him vigilant against threats to Jewry around the world.

But that understanding would never harden his heart. It would never extinguish his faith. Instead, it broadened his moral imagination, and gave him the capacity to see all people as deserving of dignity and respect. It helped him see not just the world as it is, but the world as it should be.

What Shimon did to shape the story of Israel is well chronicled. Starting on the kibbutz he founded with his love Sonya, he began the work of building a model community. Ben-Gurion called him to serve the Haganah at headquarters to make sure that the Jewish people had the armaments and the organization to secure their freedom. After independence, surrounded by enemies who denied Israel's existence and sought to drive it into the sea, the child who had wanted to be a "poet of stars" became a man who built Israel's defense in-

dustry, who laid the foundation for the formidable armed forces that won Israel's wars. His skill secured Israel's strategic position. His boldness sent Israeli commandos to Entebbe and rescued Jews from Ethiopia. His statesmanship built an unbreakable bond with the United States of America and so many other countries.

His contributions didn't end there. Shimon also showed what people can do when they harness reason and science to a common cause. He understood that a country without many natural resources could more than make up for it with the talents of its people. He made hard choices to roll back inflation and climb out from a terrible economic crisis. He championed the promise of science and technology to make the desert bloom and turned this tiny country into a central hub of the digital age, making life better not just for people here, but for people around the world.

Indeed, Shimon's contribution to this nation is so fundamental, so pervasive, that perhaps sometimes they can be overlooked. For a younger generation, Shimon was probably remembered more for a peace process that never reached its endpoint. They would listen to critics on the left who might argue that Shimon did not fully acknowledge the failings of his nation or perhaps more numerous critics on the right who argued that he refused to see the true wickedness of the world, and called him naive.

But whatever he shared with his family or his closest friends, to the world he brushed off the critics. And I know from my conversations with him that his pursuit of peace was never naive. Every Yom HaShoah, he read the names of the family that he lost. As a young man, he had fed his village by working in the fields during the day, but then defending it by carrying a rifle at night. He understood, in this war-torn region, where too often Arab youth are taught to hate Israel from an early age, he understood just how hard peace would be. I'm sure he was alternatively angry and bemused to hear the same critics, who called him hopelessly naive, depend on the defense architecture that he himself had helped to build.

I don't believe he was naive. But he understood from hard-earned experience that true security comes through making peace with your neighbors. "We won them all," he said of Israel's wars. "But we did not win the greatest victory that we aspired to: release from the need to win victories."

And just as he understood the practical necessity of peace, Shimon believed that Israel's exceptionalism was rooted not only in fidelity to the Jewish people, but to the moral and ethical vision, the precepts of his Jewish faith. "The Jewish people weren't born to rule another people," he would say. "From the very first day we are against slaves and masters."

Out of the hardships of the diaspora, he found room in his heart for others who suffered. He came to hate prejudice with the passion of one who knows how it feels to be its target. Even in the face of terrorist attacks, even after repeated disappointments at the negotiation table, he insisted that as human beings, Palestinians must be seen as equal in dignity to Jews, and must therefore be equal in self-determination. Because of his sense of justice, his analysis of Israel's security, his understanding of Israel's meaning, he believed that the Zionist idea would be best protected when Palestinians, too, had a state of their own.

Of course, we gather here in the knowledge that Shimon never saw his dream of peace fulfilled. The region is going through a chaotic time. Threats are ever present. And yet he did not stop dreaming, and he did not stop working. By the time that I came to work with Shimon, he was in the twilight of his years, although he might not admit it. I would be the 10th U.S. President since John F. Kennedy to sit down with Shimon; the 10th to fall prey to his charms. I think of him sitting in the Oval Office, this final member of Israel's founding generation, under the portrait of George Washington, telling me stories from the past, but more often talking with enthusiasm of the present: his most recent lecture, his next project, his plans for the future, the wonders of his grandchildren.

In many ways, he reminded me of some other giants of the 20th century that I've had the

honor to meet—men like Nelson Mandela; women like Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth—leaders who have seen so much, whose lives span such momentous epochs, that they find no need to posture or traffic in what's popular in the moment; people who speak with depth and knowledge, not in sound bites. They find no interest in polls or fads.

And like these leaders, Shimon could be true to his convictions even if they cut against the grain of current opinion. He knew, better than the cynic, that if you look out over the arc of history, human beings should be filled not with fear but with hope. I'm sure that's why he was so excited about technology, because for him, it symbolized the march of human progress. And it's why he loved so much to talk about young people, because he saw young people unburdened by the prejudices of the past. It's why he believed in miracles because in Israel, he saw a miracle come true.

As Americans and Israelis, we often talk about the unbreakable bonds between our nations. And, yes, these bonds encompass common interests—vital cooperation that makes both our nations more secure. But today, we are reminded that the bonds which matter most run deeper. Anchored in a Judeo-Christian tradition, we believe in the irreducible value of every human being. Our nations were built on that idea. They were built in large part by stubborn idealists and striving immigrants, including those who had fled war and fled oppression. Both our nations have flaws that we have not always fixed, corners of our history which date back to our founding that we do not always squarely address. But because our founders planted not just flags in the eternal soil, but also planted the seeds of democracy, we have the ability to always pursue a better world. We have the capacity to do what is right.

As an American, as a Christian, a person partly of African descent, born in Hawaii—a place that could not be further than where Shimon spent his youth—I took great pleasure in my friendship with this older, wiser man. We shared a love of words and books and history. And perhaps, like most politicians, we shared too great a joy in hearing ourselves talk. [*Laughter*] But beyond that, I think our friendship was rooted in the fact that I could somehow see myself in his story, and maybe he could see himself in mine. Because for all of our differences, both of us had lived such unlikely lives. It was so surprising to see the two of us where we had started, talking together in the White House, meeting here in Israel. And I think both of us understood that we were here only because in some way we reflected the magnificent story of our nations.

Shimon's story, the story of Israel, the experience of the Jewish people, I believe it is universal. It's the story of a people who, over so many centuries in the wilderness, never gave up on that basic human longing to return home. It's the story of a people who suffered the boot of oppression and the shutting of the gas chamber's door, and yet never gave up on a belief in goodness. And it's the story of a man who was counted on, and then often counted out, again and again, and who never lost hope.

Shimon Peres reminds us that the State of Israel, like the United States of America, was not built by cynics. We exist because people before us refused to be constrained by the past or the difficulties of the present. And Shimon Peres was never cynical. It is that faith, that optimism, that belief—even when all the evidence is to the contrary—that tomorrow can be better, that makes us not just honor Shimon Peres, but love him.

The last of the founding generation is now gone. Shimon accomplished enough things in his life for a thousand men. But he understood that it is better to live to the very end of his time on Earth with a longing not for the past, but for the dreams that have not yet come true: an Israel that is secure in a just and lasting peace with its neighbors. And so now this work is in the hand of Israel's next generation, in the hands of Israel's next generation and its friends.

Like Joshua, we feel the weight of responsibility that Shimon seemed to wear so lightly. But we draw strength from his example and the fact that he believed in us, even when we doubted ourselves.

Scripture tells us that before his death, Moses said, "I call upon heaven and earth to bear witness this day that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live."

Uvacharta Bachayim. Choose life. For Shimon, let us choose life, as he always did. Let us make his work our own. May God bless his memory. And may God bless this country, and this world, that he loved so dearly.

Shimon, *todah rabah chaver yakar*.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:14 a.m. at Mount Herzl. In his remarks, he referred to Tzvia Walden and Yoni and Nehemia "Chemi" Peres, children of President Peres; President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority; and Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom.

The President's Weekly Address
October 1, 2016

There are a couple different stories you can tell about our economy. One goes like this. Eight years after the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes, our economy has created jobs for 71 straight months. That's a new record. Unemployment has fallen below 5 percent. Last year, the typical household saw its income grow by about $2,800, the biggest 1-year increase ever. And the uninsured rate is at an all-time low.

All that is true. What's also true is that too much of our wealth is still taken by the top, and that leaves too many families still working paycheck to paycheck, without a lot of breathing room.

There are two things we can do about this. We can prey on people's worries for political gain, or we can actually do something to help working families feel more secure in today's economy.

Count me in the latter camp. And here's one thing that will help right away: making sure more of our families have access to paid leave. Today, having both parents in the workforce is an economic necessity for many families. But right now millions of Americans don't have access to even a single day of paid sick leave. So, if you get sick, that sticks you with a lousy choice. Do you go to work and get everyone else sick too, or do you take care of yourself at the risk of a paycheck? If your kid gets sick, do you send her to school anyway, or do you stay home to take care of her, lose a day's pay, and maybe even put your own job at risk?

We shouldn't have to make choices like that in America. That's why I've repeatedly called on the Republican Congress to pass a law guaranteeing most workers in America the chance to earn 7 days of paid sick leave each year. Of course, Congress hasn't acted. But we've also worked with States, cities, and businesses to try to get the job done, and many have, pointing to research showing that paid leave actually helps their bottom line. In fact, since I took office, another 10 million private sector workers have gained paid sick leave, making up a record share of our workforce.

Unfortunately, there are still about 40 million private sector workers who don't get a single day. That's why I'm doing what I can on my own. Effective on January 1, Federal contractors will be required to give their employees working on new Federal contracts up to 7 paid sick days each year. That's happening. It will help about a million workers when they or a loved one gets sick. It will cover time you need for preventive care. It will cover absences resulting from domestic violence or sexual assault. And it means everyone else is less likely to catch what someone else has got, whether it's a coworker or the person preparing or serving your food.

Paid sick leave isn't a side issue or a women's issue or something that's just nice to have. It's a must-have. By the way, so are economic priorities like childcare, paid family leave, equal pay, and a higher minimum wage. We need a Congress that will act on all these issues too, because they'd make a meaningful difference in the lives

of millions of Americans who are working hard every day. It's more than talk, it's action. And that's what you should demand of every politician who wants the privilege to serve you.

Thanks, everybody, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 1:10 p.m. on September 29 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on October 1. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 30, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on October 1. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the White House South by South Lawn Festival
October 3, 2016

Whenever I hear people make gloomy claims about how America is on the downswing, they're either out to promote themselves, or talking about some alternate reality. Think about it—if you had to choose any time in the course of human history to be alive, you'd choose this one. Right here, right now, right in America.

New technologies and new innovations are transforming the way we live, opening up incredible opportunities to create, to discover, and to do what we never thought possible.

At the same time, we have to navigate these changes in a smart way. They also can be disruptive, even scary—and sometimes, they leave folks behind.

Our task is to come together and build a future that's more inclusive, tolerant, and full of opportunity for everybody. And I've never been more optimistic that we will.

As President, I've spent the last eight years finding the best people to help us meet that challenge. People who reject cynicism. People who turn change into a force for good. People who believe that, no matter who we are, where we come from, who we love, or what God we pray to, we—the people—can create a world that's worthy of our brightest hopes.

So today, I'm inviting a bunch of these folks to my backyard for South by South Lawn.

Much like the festival I dropped by in Austin earlier this year, SXSL is, at its heart, a call to action. The folks out on the lawn today are artists, creators, entrepreneurs, and innovators who will share how they've used their unique skills to engage their communities in making the change they want to see—whether it's curing cancer, fighting poverty, empowering women, and so much more.

We'll welcome people like Jukay Hsu, an Iraq War veteran with a Bronze Star for his service to our country who uses technology to build a path out of poverty for people in Queens. Or Oscar Menjivar, who is pushing schools in Los Angeles to bring technology into the classroom so kids can get a head start on coding. Or Dr. Nina Tandon, the founder of the world's first company growing living human bones to help with reconstruction and recovery.

Those are just a few of the incredible people you'll see out at South by South Lawn all day today. And believe me—it's a sight to see.

We've got an art installation made entirely of sticky notes where people share how they will make a positive impact where they live. We've got a virtual reality exhibit where people can experience what it's like to live in solitary confinement and learn firsthand why it should be banned from our prisons.

We'll discuss questions that will define the coming decades: How do we harness technology to solve our most stubborn problems? How will we sustainably feed ourselves in the near future? How do we foster innovation in the heart of our cities? How do we, as citizens, engage to bring about lasting change?

And I'll join a conversation with Dr. Katherine Hayhoe, a climate scientist, and Leonardo DiCaprio, a longtime ally in the fight against climate change, to explore how we can move forward in our efforts to protect the one planet

we've got. Leo is also debuting his documentary film on climate change tonight.

Given his day job, I'm betting it's pretty good.

So join us today on the South Lawn to see how you can lend a hand in building a world we want to live in.

That's our responsibility as citizens. That doesn't mean this has be your full-time job. It doesn't mean you have to run for office or launch a start-up. But it does mean that whatever field you're in, whatever skill you have, whatever passion you're pursuing, you can find a way to engage, to participate, and to make a difference.

See you on the lawn,

PRESIDENT OBAMA

NOTE: This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 2 as an e-mail message from the President to be distributed on October 3. The statement referred to Jukay Hsu, founder, Coalition for Queens; Oscar Menjivar, founder and chief executive officer, URBAN Teens eXploring Technology; Nina Tandon, chief executive officer and cofounder, EpiBone; Katharine Hayhoe, associate professor of political science and director of the Climate Science Center, Texas Tech University; and actor and producer Leonardo DiCaprio.

Remarks During a Panel Discussion on Climate Change at the White House South by South Lawn Festival

October 3, 2016

The President. Hello, everybody.

Actor and producer Leonardo DiCaprio. I want to thank you all for coming here this evening. I want to particularly thank our President for his extraordinary environmental leadership. [*Applause*]

The President. Thank you.

Mr. DiCaprio. Most recently, in protecting our oceans.

Katharine, thank you for the great work you do on climate change and in helping improve preparedness of communities to deal with the impacts of climate change.

And thank all of you for showing up here this evening.

Tonight I am pleased to present the U.S. premier of my new documentary, "Before the Flood." This was a 3-year endeavor on the part of myself and my director, Fisher Stevens. Together, we traveled from China to India, to Greenland, to the Arctic, Indonesia to Micronesia, to Miami to learn more about the effects of climate change on our planet and highlight the message from the scientific community and leaders worldwide on the urgency of the issue.

This film was developed to show the devastating impacts that climate change is having on our planet and, more importantly, what can be done. Our intention for the film was to be released before this upcoming election, because, after experiencing firsthand the devastating impacts of climate change worldwide, we, like many of you here today, realize that urgent action must be taken.

This moment is more important than ever. We must empower leaders who not only believe in climate change, but are willing to do something about it. The scientific consensus is in, and the argument is now over. If you do not believe in climate change, you do not believe in facts or in science or empirical truths, and therefore, in my humble opinion, should not be allowed to hold public office.

So, with that, I'm so very honored and pleased to be joined onstage with one of those leaders, a President who has done more to create solutions for the climate crisis than any other in history, President Barack Obama——

The President. Yay! Thank you.

Mr. DiCaprio. ——along with leading climate scientist, Katharine Hayhoe, for this conversation about how we can make real progress on this issue.

The President's Environmental Accomplishments/Paris Agreement on Climate Change

So, with that, let us begin with the first question. President Obama, you're nearing the end of your second term as President. You've had an opportunity to reflect on the issues facing our country and our planet. How do you grade the global response to the climate change movement thus far?

The President. We get an incomplete. But the good news is, we can still pass the course if we make some good decisions now.

So, first of all, I just want to thank everybody who's been here, all day, some of you; everybody who's been involved in South by South Lawn. It looked really fun. [*Laughter*] I was not allowed to have fun today. I had to work, although I did take some time—you guys may have noticed—to take a picture with one of the Lego men. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. Happy anniversary, Mr. President!

The President. Thank you. It is my anniversary today. We celebrated it yesterday, yes; 24 years FLOTUS has put up with me. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Leo for the terrific job he's done in producing the film, along with Fisher. All of you will have a chance to see it at its premier tonight. And I think after watching it, it will give you a much better sense of the stakes involved and why it's so important for all of us to be engaged.

And I want to thank Katharine from Texas Tech.

Audience member. Woo!

The President. We've got to give—there we go. We've got a couple Texas Tech folks in here. But because Katharine, in addition of being an outstanding climate scientist, is a person of deep faith, and she has really done some amazing stuff to reach out to some unconventional audiences to start fostering a broader coalition around this issue.

To your question, Leo, we are very proud of the work that we've been able to do over the last 8 years here in the United States: doubling fuel efficiency standards on cars; really ramping up our investment in clean energy so that we've doubled the production of clean energy since I came into office. We have increased wind power threefold. We've increased the production of solar power thirtyfold. We have, as a consequence, slowed our emissions and reduced the pace at which we are emitting carbon dioxide in the atmosphere faster than any other advanced nation.

And that's the good news. The other big piece of good news was the Paris Agreement, which we were finally able to get done. And for those of you who are not as familiar with it, essentially what the Paris Agreement did was, for the first time, mobilize 200 nations around the world to sign up, agree to specific steps they are going to take in order to begin to bend the curve and start reducing carbon emissions.

Now, not every country is doing the exact same thing because not every country produces the same amount of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, per capita. So the expectation is, is that a country like the United States is going to do more than a small, underdeveloped country that doesn't have the same scale of emissions.

But the good news about the Paris Agreement was, it committed everybody to do something. And although, if you add it up, all the commitments that were made by all twenty—200 nations, it would still not be sufficient to deal with the pace of warming that we're seeing in the atmosphere. What it does do is set up for the first time the architecture, the mechanism whereby we can consistently start turning up the dials and reducing the amount of carbon pollution that we're putting into the atmosphere.

And one last piece of good news about that is that I anticipate that this agreement will actually go into force in the next few weeks. India, just this past week, signed on.

Mr. DiCaprio. Big deal.

Texas Tech University Climate Science Center Director Katharine Hayhoe. Yes, huge.

The President. And we're going to get a few more nations signing on. And so, officially, this agreement will be into force much faster than I think many of us anticipated when we first organized it.

Last two points, little tidbits of good news. This week, we'll begin negotiations on an aviation agreement, an international aviation agreement, where all airlines and major carriers around the world begin to figure out how they can reduce the amount of greenhouse gases that they're emitting——

Ms. Hayhoe. That's huge.

The President. ——which can make a big difference. And over the next couple weeks, we're also going to be negotiating around something called hydrofluorocarbons—or HFCs—which are other sources of greenhouse gases that, if we are able to reduce them, can have a big impact as well.

So, even with the Paris Agreement done, we're still pushing forward hard in every area that we can to keep making progress. But, having said all that—and this is where you'll need to hear from Katharine, because in the nicest way possible, she's going to scare the heck out of you as a precursor to the film—what we're seeing is that climate change is happening even faster than the predictions would have told us 5 years ago or 10 years ago. What we're seeing is changes in climate patterns that are on the more pessimistic end of what was possible—the ranges that had been discerned or anticipated by our scientists—which means we're really in a race against time.

And part of what I'm hoping everybody here comes away from is hope that we can actually do something about it, but also a sense of urgency that this is not going to be something that we can just kind of mosey along about and put up with climate denial or obstructionist politics for very long if in fact we want to leave for the next generation beautiful days like today. So—[*applause*].

Mr. DiCaprio. With that, Katharine, all the environmental crises we face have a huge toll on humanity—on poverty, security, public health, and disaster preparedness. The interconnected nature of our climate means that no country or community is going to be immune to any of these threats. What are the most urgent threats to our modern day civilization? And where do you feel the solutions lie?

Ms. Hayhoe. Well, how many hours do we have again? [*Laughter*] It's true, when we think of global issues, we think of poverty, we think of hunger, we think of disease, we think of people dying today from preventable causes that no one should be dying from in 2016.

And when we're confronted with these situations head on—and I, myself, spent a number of years as a child growing up in South America, so I know what this looks like—we think to ourselves, climate change, it's important, but we can deal with it later. We can no longer afford to deal with it later. Because if we want to fix poverty, if we want to fix hunger, if we want to fix inequality, if we want to fix disease and water scarcity, we are pouring all of our money, all of our effort, all of our hope and prayers into a bucket, and the bucket has a hole in the bottom. And that hole is climate change. And it is getting bigger and bigger.

To fix the global issues that we all care about, including environmental issues, including humanitarian issues, we can no longer leave climate change out of the picture because we will not be able to fix them without it.

Alternative and Renewable Energy Sources/Environmental Regulations/Acid Rain/Ozone Depletion

Mr. DiCaprio. Mr. President, in "Before the Flood," we see examples of the environmental impacts of corporate greed—corporate greed from the oil and gas industries, for example, what's happening right now in Standing Rock—but some companies are starting to realize that addressing the climate change issue can actually spur economic activity. How do you get more companies to start moving in this direction, to take fundamental action into their business decision?

The President. Well, companies respond to incentives. And the question then becomes, can we harness the power and the creativity of the marketplace to come up with innovation and solutions?

And look, the economics of energy are extremely complicated. But let me just simplify it as much as possible. Dirty fuel is cheap, because we've been doing it a long time, so we know how to burn coal to produce electricity.

We know how to burn oil, and we know how to burn gas. And if it weren't for pollution, the natural inclination of everybody would be to say let's go with the cheap stuff.

And particularly when it comes to poorer countries—you take an example like India, where hundreds of millions of people still don't have electricity on a regular basis, and they would like to have the standards of living that, if not immediately as high as ours, at least would mean that they're not engaging in back-breaking work just to feed themselves or keep warm—it's completely understandable that their priority is to create electricity for their people.

And if we're going to be able to solve this problem, we are going to have to come up with new sources of energy that are clean and cheap. Now, that's going to involve research; it's going to involve investment in R&D. And there are going to be startups and innovators, and there are some in this audience who are doing all kinds of amazing things. But it takes time to ramp up these new energy sources. And we're in a battle against time.

The best way we can spur that kind of innovation is to either create regulations that say, figure it out, and if you don't figure it out, then you're going to pay a penalty; or to create something like a carbon tax, which gives an economic incentive for businesses to do this.

Now, I'll be honest with you. If—in the current environment in Congress, and certainly internationally, the likelihood of an immediate carbon tax is a ways away. But if you look at what we're doing just with power plants, a major source of greenhouse gases, we put forward something called the Clean Power Plan—clean power rule—as a centerpiece of our climate change strategy. And we did this under existing authorities under the Environmental Protection Act.

And what we're saying to States is, you can figure out the energy mix, but you've got to figure out how to reduce your carbon emissions, and you need to work with your utilities and you need to work with your companies, and come up with innovative solutions. And we're not going to dictate to you exactly how do you do it, but if you don't start reducing them, you're going to have problems. And we'll come up with a plan for you.

So the good news is that in the past, where we create an incentive for companies, it turns out that we're more creative, we're more innovative, we typically solve the problem cheaper, faster than we expected, and we create jobs in the process.

And if you doubt that, I'll just give you two quick examples—because this is probably a pretty young audience, and I know this is going to seem like ancient history, but when I arrived in college in Los Angeles in 1979—[*laughter*]—I still remember, like, the sunsets were spectacular. I mean, they were just these amazing colors. It was like I'd never seen them before, because I was coming from Hawaii. And I started asking people, why are the sunsets here so spectacular?

Ms. Hayhoe. Yes. Right.

The President. They said, well, that's all smog, man. That—it's creating this psychedelic stuff that normally is not seen in nature—[*laughter*]—because the light is getting filtered in all kinds of weird ways.

You couldn't run for more than 10, 15 minutes on an alert day without really choking up, the same way you still do in Beijing. Well, L.A. is not pristine today, but we have substantially reduced smog in Los Angeles because of things like the catalytic converter and really rigorous standards.

The same is true with something called acid rain. In the Northeast, there was a time where—Doc, make sure I'm getting this right—it was sulfur dioxides, right?

Ms. Hayhoe. Dioxide, yes.

The President. Which was being generated from industrial plants, was going up into the atmosphere and then coming down in rain. It was killing forests all throughout the Northeast. And through the Clean Air Act, they essentially set up the equivalent of a cap-and-trade system. They said, companies, you figure out how to reduce your carbon dioxide emissions; we won't tell you exactly how to do it, but we're going to give you a powerful incen-

tive. We'll penalize you if you don't do it. You can capture some of the gains if you do do it.

Most of you don't hear anything about acid rain anymore, even though it was huge news 25, 30 years ago, because——

Ms. Hayhoe. We fixed it.

The President. We fixed it. And the last example I'll use is the ozone. It used to be that one of the things we were really scared about was the ozone layer was vanishing. And when I was growing up, I wasn't sure exactly what the ozone layer was, but I didn't like the idea that there was a big hole that was developing in the atmosphere. [*Laughter*] It just didn't sound good. And it turned out that one of the main contributors to this was everybody was using deodorant with aerosol. And so everybody starting getting speed strips or whatever. [*Laughter*]

And it wasn't that big of an inconvenience. Deodorant companies still made money. But something that I was amazed by—and it gives you a sense of nature's resiliency when we do the right thing—we just got reports over the last couple of months that that hole in the ozone layer is beginning to close, which is amazing. [*Applause*] Right? And all it took was people not using aerosol deodorant.

Ms. Hayhoe. A few more things. [*Laughter*]

The President. There were a couple other things. I'm exaggerating. [*Laughter*] Well, but essentially, we regulated the kinds of pollutants that were creating this hole without impeding our economic development. Nobody misses what we didn't—because companies were innovated enough to come up with substitutes that worked just fine.

And that's the basic strategy that we've got to employ here. We've got to give incentives to companies: startups, existing companies. And we're going to have to do that initially, country by country. But America has got to lead the way because not only do we have the highest carbon footprint, per capita, but also because we happen to be the most innovative, dynamic business and entrepreneurial sector in the world. And if we create incentives for ourselves, we will help to fix this problem internationally. I'm absolutely confident of the matter.

Mr. DiCaprio. Back to something you mentioned earlier, Mr. President, which I'd like both of you to talk a little bit about. The United States, as you said, has been the largest contributor to global emission in history. And as you said as well, we need to set the example for the rest of the world to follow. Throughout my journey, most of the scientific community truly believes that the silver bullet to combat this issue is a carbon tax.

Now, a carbon tax, as complex as it is to implement, I would imagine, is something that needs to be—needs to come from the people. It needs to come from the will of the people, which means there needs to be more awareness about this issue. Do you think that I will get to see a carbon tax in the next decade? [*Laughter*] Will we get to see this in our lifetime? Because most scientists specifically point to the idea that that's going to be the game-changer.

The President. Katharine?

Ms. Hayhoe. Good question. I think he knows the likelihood of that more than I do, but I do know that one of my absolute favorite organizations is Citizens' Climate Lobby, and they are founded on the premise of a simple carbon tax: nothing fancy, no difficult regulations, no 3 feet of code. It's putting a price on carbon to allow the market to then figure out what's the cheapest way to get our energy.

Mr. DiCaprio. Can you explain to our audience what a carbon tax would mean?

Ms. Hayhoe. Sure. In very basic terms, when we burn carbon it has harmful impacts on us, on our health, on our water, on our economy, on our agriculture, even on our national security. By putting a fee on that carbon, it makes certain types of energy more expensive, and it makes other types of energy less expensive.

And the way I like it—there's many different flavors—the kind I like is where that extra revenue is returned to us through our taxes and also used to incentivize technological development.

Mr. DiCaprio. Or it could be given to education, for example.

Ms. Hayhoe. Yes.

Mr. DiCaprio. Bravo. [*Laughter*] Katharine, you live in Texas.

Ms. Hayhoe. I do.

Audience members. Woo!

Ms. Hayhoe. So do people over there.

Mr. DiCaprio. [*Laughter*] They've experienced unprecedented drought and floods in the past five years, and they're also a major energy producer. As you travel the State, what are the biggest misperceptions you hear about climates—from climate skeptics who often say these changes are the result of the cyclical nature of our planet's temperature patterns? And how do you change their minds?

Ms. Hayhoe. Any of us who pays attention to the weather, we know that we have cold and hot, we have dry, and we have wet. And anybody who has ever been to Texas knows that it looks more like this.

[*Ms. Hayhoe moved her arm up and down in a wave pattern.*]

Yes. So you might say, well, then why does it matter if our weather is incredibly variably anyways? It matters because in a warmer planet, it's taking that natural pattern of variability and that brings drought and flood, heat and cold, and it is stretching it. So our heavy rainfalls are getting more extreme, because in a warmer atmosphere, the oceans are warmer, so more water evaporates. So the water is just sitting up there waiting for a storm to come through, pick it up, and dump it on us. Just as has happened in recent days, what happened in Baton Rouge a little while ago, and if you read the reports of the meteorologists and the weather people talking about these heavy downpours we are experiencing, you will see this phrase they repeat again and again.

The warm oceans—and again this year is a 99-percent chance of being again the warmest year on record after last year and the year before—the warm oceans are providing a nearly infinite source of moisture for these storms. But at the same time, when we are in a dry period, as we get all the time in Texas and its hotter than average, then all of the moisture and soil in our reservoir evaporates quicker leaving us dryer for a longer period of time. So yes, we know natural cycles are real. But we know that climate change is stretching that natural pattern, impacting us and our economy.

Here's the cool thing about Texas though. What do you think when you think of Texas?

The President. Wind power.

Ms. Hayhoe. Wind power, yes.

The President. I cheated, I know.

Ms. Hayhoe. He cheated. He knows the answer. [*Laughter*] Texas knows energy. And here's the cool thing about Texas. Did you know that already Texas is getting 10 percent of its electricity from wind? On a windy night, we get 50 percent of our energy from wind.

[*At this point, Ms. Hayhoe continued her remarks, concluding as follows.*]

In Texas, we have entire towns going a hundred-percent renewable because it is the cheapest way for them to get their energy. We have Fort Hood, which is the biggest military installation in the U.S., signing a new electricity contract for wind and solar because they can save the American taxpayer $165 million by going green.

Green is no longer just a color of money—or the color of trees, I should say. Green is also increasingly in Texas, around the U.S., and even in China, becoming the color of money as well. Wind and solar are the way of the future. And we're seeing it happen. As a scientist, though, I have to say my only concern is, we're not seeing it happen fast enough.

Politics of Climate Change/Alternative and Renewable Energy Sources/Coal, Natural Gas, and Nuclear Energy

Mr. DiCaprio. Mr. President, this has been an unusual election year, to say the least. [*Laughter*] And Gallup regularly polls Americans with an open-ended question about the issues that matter most to them. And the environment consistently polls low on that list, around 2 percent. As you know, climate change is a long-term problem that requires long-term solutions. How can we all do better—do a better job of engaging the public, especially those who are skeptical, in a meaningful and produc-

tive debate about the urgency of these issues and inspire them to be a part of the solution now?

The President. Well, climate change is almost perversely designed to be really hard to solve politically because it is a problem that creeps up on you. There's no single hurricane or tornado or drought or forest fire that you can directly attribute to climate change. What you know is, is that as the planet gets warmer, the likelihood of what used to be, say, a 100-year flood—it's supposed to happen only every 100 years—suddenly starts happening every 5 years, or every 2 years.

And so the odds just increase of extreme weather patterns. But people, they don't see it as directly correlated. And the political system in every country is not well designed to do something tough now to solve a problem that people are really going to feel the impacts of in the future. The natural inclination of political systems is to push that stuff off as long as possible.

So, if we are going to solve this problem, then we're going to need some remarkable innovation. I mean, Katharine is exactly right that solar and wind is becoming a job generator and an economic development engine. But what's also true is, we're going to need some real innovation in things like, for example, battery storage. How do we keep wind and solar stored without too much leakage so that when the wind is not blowing or the Sun is not shining, we still have regular energy power. We're still going to need some really big technological breakthroughs.

But with the technology that we have right now, my goal has been to build that bridge to this clean energy future. To make sure that over the next 20 years, using existing technologies, we do everything we can even as we're creating the even more innovative technology, so that by the time those technologies are ready, we haven't already created an irreversible problem.

And that's going to require mobilization. It is going to require us all doing a better job of educating ourselves, our friends, our neighbors, our coworkers, and ultimately, expressing that in the polls. And in order to do that, I think it is important for those of us who care deeply about this—and Katharine is a wonderful example of the right way to do it—to not be dismissive of people's concerns when it comes to what will this mean for me and my family. Right?

So, if you're a working class family, and dad has to drive 50 miles to get to his job, and he does—he can't afford to buy a Tesla or a Prius, and the most important thing to him economically to make sure he can pay the bills at the end of the month is the price of gas, and when gas prices are low that means an extra 100 bucks in his pocket or 200 bucks in his pocket, and that may make the difference about whether or not he can buy enough food for his kids—if you just start lecturing him about climate change and what's going to happen to the planet 50 years from now, it's just not going to register.

So part of what we have to do, I think, is to engage, talk about the science, talk about the concrete effects of climate change. We have to make it visual, and we have to make it vivid in ways that people can understand. But then, we also have to recognize that this transition is not going to happen overnight, and you're not starting from scratch. People are locked into existing ways of doing business.

I'm—look, part of the reason we have such a big carbon footprint is our entire society is built around Interstate Highway Systems and cars. And we can't, overnight, suddenly just start having everybody taking high-speed trains because we don't have any high-speed trains to take. And we have to build them.

Ms. Hayhoe. Yes, right. [*Laughter*]

The President. And we should start building them. But in the meantime, people have to get to work.

So I think having an understanding that we're not going to complete this transition overnight, that there are going to be some compromises along the way, that that's frustrating because the science tells us we don't have time to compromise; on the other hand, if we actually want to get something done, then we've got to take people's immediate, current

views into account. That's how we're going to move the ball forward.

And I'll just give you one example. And this is—generally, I get—this is a pretty sympathetic crowd, but some folks will push back on this. When you think about coal, we've significantly reduced the amount of power that we're generating from coal. And it's going to continue to go down. Well, number one, coalminers feel like we—they've been battered, and they often blame me and my tree-hugger friends—[*laughter*]—for having created real economic problems in places like West Virginia or parts of Kentucky or parts of my home State of southern Illinois.

Interestingly enough, one of the reasons why we've seen a significant reduction of coal usage in the United States is not because of our regulations. It's been because natural gas got really cheap as a consequence of fracking. Now, there are a lot of environmentalists who absolutely object to fracking because their attitude is, sometimes, it's done really sloppy and releases methane that is even a worse greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. It leaks into people's water supplies and aquifers and when done improperly can really harm a lot of people. And their attitude is, we've got to leave that stuff in the ground if we're going to solve climate change.

And I get all that. On the other hand, the fact that we're transitioning from coal to natural gas means less greenhouse gases. Same thing with nuclear power. People don't like nuclear power because they have visions of Chernobyl or Three Mile Island, what are we doing with the storage of the waste. Nuclear power generally evokes a lot of stuff in our imaginations. But clean—nuclear power doesn't emit greenhouse gases.

So we've got to make some decisions. If we're going to get India or China to actually sign on to reducing carbon emissions, then we're going to have to have a conversation with them about nuclear power and help them with technologies that ensure safety, and we can figure out how to store it until we invent the perfect energy source—lithium crystals or whatever, and Scotty is there beaming us up. [*Laughter*] But until then, we've got to live in the real world.

So I say all that not because I don't recognize the urgency of the problem. It is because we're going to have to straddle between the world as it is and the world as we want it to be and build that bridge. And what I always tell my staff, and what I told our negotiators during the Paris Agreement, is better is good. Better is not always enough; better is not always ideal, and in the case of climate change, better is not going to save the planet. But if we get enough better, each year, we're doing something that's making more progress, moving us forward, increasing clean energy, then that's ultimately how we end up solving this problem.

And that's when we can start creating political coalitions that will listen to us, because we're actually recognizing that some people have some real concerns about what this transition is going to do to them, to their pocketbook, and we've got to make sure that they feel like they're being heard in this whole process.

Ms. Hayhoe. Absolutely. I couldn't agree more, first of all. And second of all, I think that this really underscores one of the biggest lessons that I, as a scientist, have learned. So, so often, we feel like facts and information are what's going to make people care.

And so many times, I have somebody come into me and say, Katharine, if you could just talk to my mother, if you could just talk to my brother-in-law, if you could just talk to our city councilperson and give them the facts—it's real, it's us, it's bad, we have to fix it—that will change their minds. The biggest thing I've learned is that facts are not enough. In fact, the more literate we are about science, the more polarized, we are about climate change.

The most important thing to do is not to pile up scientific reports until they reach a tottering pile of about 8 feet, where they'll tip over and crush somebody. The most important thing to do is to connect this issue to what's already in our hearts. Because one of the most insidious myths I feel like we've bought into is that I have to be a certain type of person to care about climate change. And if I am not that person, then I don't care about it because I care

about these other things. But the reality is, is that if we're a human living on this planet—which most of us are, yes—as long as we haven't signed up for the trip to Mars—I don't want to know if anybody has. I think you're crazy. [*Laughter*]

Mr. DiCaprio. I did, but I canceled.

Ms. Hayhoe. Oh, you did? Oh, I'm sorry, I take that back. [*Laughter*]

The President. No, no, he is—I think he'll acknowledge he's crazy. [*Laughter*] That's okay.

Mr. DiCaprio. That's out.

Ms. Hayhoe. All right, we'll go with that. [*Laughter*] So, if we're a human living on this planet, this is the only planet we have. It's our home. If we're a parent, we would do anything for our children's sake. If we're a businessperson, we care about the economy. We care about the community that we live in. We care about our house. We care about the fact that we want to have clean air to breathe; we want to have enough water to drink; we want to have a safe and secure environment in which to live.

The single most important thing I feel like I've learned is that we already have all the values we need to care about climate change in our hearts, no matter who we are and what part of the spectrum we come from. We just have to figure out how to connect those values to the issue of climate.

Climate Change/Sea Levels/National Security Implications of Climate Change/Energy Efficiency

[*Ms. Hayhoe responded to several questions posed by Mr. DiCaprio, who then continued as follows.*]

Mr. DiCaprio. I got the opportunity to sit with the head of NASA, and you'll see a lot of this in the film, but he basically projected the next 20 to 30 years. And he started talking about specifically the United States and the possibility of another Dust Bowl coming up. I asked about my home State of California and the wildfires and the droughts that are occurring there. And he said you can expect to continue that.

Ms. Hayhoe. Yes.

Mr. DiCaprio. Do you agree that if we—we're going to feel some of the repercussions of climate change in the form of rising sea levels, more intense hurricanes, and we're going to see droughts and wildfires like that start to occur in the future. How—what do you think the future is going to look like for us if we do not take immediate action? Do you think we'll be able to sustain the projected levels of what's going to happen to our planet for the next 20 years? Or do you think that if we don't take immediate action, things are going to get exponentially worse?

[*Ms. Hayhoe made brief remarks, concluding as follows.*]

Ms. Hayhoe. It isn't a single event where we can point at, and we can say, okay, that event was definitely climate change, but that event was a hundred-percent natural. It's more like climate change is taking the natural weather dice—and there's always a chance of rolling a double six, an event that has a huge impact on us, economically—and climate change is sneaking in when we're not looking, and it's taking another one of those numbers and replacing it with a six and then another number and replacing it with a six. So the chances of rolling that double six are increasing the further we go down this road.

The President. Now, one thing I'd say, Leo, and I think Katharine alluded to this—another analogy to think about is, we're heading towards a cliff at 90 miles an hour. And if we hit the brakes, we don't come to an immediate stop without spinning out of control. And so what we have to do is, we have to tap the brakes. And if we tap the brakes now, then we don't go over the cliff.

So, when you think about climate change, there's a big difference between the oceans rising 3 feet or the oceans rising 10 feet. Three feet, it's going to be expensive and inconvenient and disruptive. And we already see that—if you live in Miami right now—and I think, in fact, in your film, you reference this—there are sunny days where, at noon, suddenly, there's 2 feet of water in the middle of the streets. And the reason is because as the

oceans and the tides rise, Miami is on pretty porous rock, so it's not even sufficient to build, like, a wall because it's coming up through the ground.

And it's going to be really expensive for Miami with 3 feet of water—or 3 feet of higher ocean. But it's probably manageable. Once you start getting to 10 feet, then you don't have South Florida. There will still be Florida, but it will be the Florida that it looked like maybe a million years ago.

Ms. Hayhoe. Yes.

The President. And that's a lot of property value. South Beach and Coral Gables, and there are a lot of really nice spots. [*Laughter*]

My hometown of Hawaii—or Honolulu. Honolulu will still be there, but 3 feet just means you're moving houses a little bit back from the beach. Ten feet means the beach doesn't exist.

And so the ramifications of whether we work on this now, steadily, and make progress or we don't could mean the difference between huge disruptions versus adaptations that are expensive and inconvenient, but that don't fundamentally change the shape of our society or put us into potential conflict.

Now, I'm using examples here in the United States. Poor countries are obviously much more vulnerable. If you see a change in monsoon patterns in the Indian subcontinent, well, you've got potentially a billion people who are dependent on a certain pattern of rains, the Himalayas getting a certain amount of snowpack, et cetera, and those folks' margin of error is so thin that you might end up seeing migrations of hundreds of millions of people, which invariably will create significant conflict.

There's already some really interesting work—not definitive, but powerful—showing that the droughts that happened in Syria contributed to the unrest and the Syrian civil war. Well, if you start magnifying that across a lot of States, a lot of nation States that already contain a lot of poor people who are just right at the margins of survival, this becomes a national security issue.

And that's why, even as we have Members of Congress who scoff at climate change at the same time as they are saluting and wearing flag pins and extolling their patriotism, they're not paying attention to our Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Pentagon who are saying that this is one of the most significant national security threats that we face over the next 50 years.

And all of which is to say that as hard as it is for us to start acting now to solve a problem that has not fully manifested itself yet, this is going to be a really important test for humanity and our political system. And it's a test that requires everybody to do better. It requires me to do better, as somebody who's got a voice. It requires Katharine and scientists to communicate more effectively. Everybody should take a lesson from Katharine on how to explain this stuff in ways that people understand.

It requires us reaching out to the faith community in ways that Katharine has done a really good job of, because there are a lot of evangelicals who are actually generally on the conservative side of the spectrum, but care deeply about this planet that God made. It requires us to reach out to sportsmen and hunters and fishermen who may not agree at all on Second Amendment issues, but they sure like and understand the notion that they've got a forest where they can go out and—although they probably don't want to be mauled by a grizzly bear—[*laughter*]—that looks a little severe. [*Laughter*]

So all of us I think are going to have to do better than we're doing in elevating this issue. And as I said before, better is good. We can start with existing technologies. I'll just use one last example on this.

If we just had the energy efficiency of Japan, which is an island nation that doesn't have a lot of fossil fuels, and so, historically, in their development path have been much more conscious about energy efficiency, we could reduce our energy consumption by 20 percent without changing our standard of living. Simple stuff like when you leave a room the light automatically goes off instead of its still being on.

A lot of companies are doing some smart work because it affects their bottom line. Our ability to measure in houses sort of smartly how much energy we're using and minimizing waste of energy and heat can make a huge dif-

ference. Folks in Texas, you need—air conditioning is a great invention, but nothing gets me more frustrated than seeing somebody, and it's 100 degrees outside, and they're wearing a sweater indoors because the air conditioning is turned up too high.

Ms. Hayhoe. Yes, yes.

The President. But we do that everywhere—partly because of building design. You can't open the windows, and so, as a consequence, you can't use natural temperature regulators.

There's a bunch of stuff that seems kind of simple and stupid, but would make a big dent. All those things have to start getting factored in. But we've got to change our politics. And as Leo said, it's got to come from the bottom up. Until on a bipartisan basis, politicians feel that their failure to address this will cost them their seats, potentially, or will threaten their careers, then they're going to continue to operate in ways that I think are really unproductive.

Ms. Hayhoe. Yes. I began to study climate science over 20 years ago, and I have lived through the period where climate change has become one of the most politicized issues in the entire United States to where the number-one predictor of what our opinions are about climate change is nothing more than where we fall on the political spectrum.

The reality is, as my husband says, who is an evangelical pastor, a thermometer is not Democrat or Republican. It does not give us different numbers depending on how we vote. The science is what it is. If we say gravity isn't real, and we step off the cliff, we're going down anyways. But the solutions are political. Do we go with a cap-and-trade? Do we go with a carbon tax? Do we go with technological incentivizes? What do we do about other countries? How do we build States and businesses and communities? These are political, and they should be debated up and down the halls. But what should not be debated is the fact that we are all human, we share this amazing home that we live in, and it is in all of our best interests to make sure that we leave it a better place for our children.

The President. Good.

Environmental Conservation/Air Pollution/China

Mr. DiCaprio. This is my last question. President Obama, you used the Antiquities Act to preserve more acres of land and sea than any President since Teddy Roosevelt. [*Applause*] I was going to say, let's give him a round of applause, but they did that automatically. The great Teddy Roosevelt. How important is it to have a President who not only believes in the science of climate change—[*laughter*]—but one who understands that we must conserve these natural resources to create conditions that are conducive to a sustainable life for future generations?

The President. Well, this goes to the point Katharine made about values. And I mentioned I grew up in Hawaii. Those of you who have been there, it's a really pretty place. And the native Hawaiian traditions are so woven with nature and the sea and outdoors, and so that seeps into you when you grow up there.

But I tell you, I don't know any place in the country where there isn't someplace that evokes the same kind of sense of place and beauty. It may be a desert landscape. It may be a forest somewhere. It may be a mountain. And as my girls start getting older, I start thinking about grandkids—not soon. [*Laughter*] But it's natural, you start thinking about sort of the next stages of your life and the idea that my grandkids wouldn't see something I had seen, that—you can be a conservative Republican in Alabama, but you've got a memory of your dad taking you out hunting, and you being quiet and still, and you want to do that same thing with your kid. And it may be different than me taking my grandkid bodysurfing at Sandy Beach, but there's the same feeling of wanting to pass that on, of feeling deeply about it and caring deeply about it.

And I think one of the ways for us to tackle the climate change issue is also to lift up the power and the values that are embodied in conservation. It's kind of a twofer. When we went out to Midway Island, which is already a historic site because in part this was the turning point of World War II. There are people who revere this site because of its history in

World War II and the incredible courage and bravery of people who were outnumbered, but ultimately were able to turn back the—a Japanese fleet that was on its way to Hawaii.

But we were up there, and this is water that's just untouched. And you're seeing monk seals diving in and swimming next to you, and turtles that are climbing up on the beach just to sun themselves, and it used to be there were 60,000 birds, and now there are 3 million birds on this island—bunch of species that were about to go extinct. It all came back just in the span of one generation because of conservation. Well, not only is that creating incredible beauty, but it also means now that you have this huge preserve of ocean that is not contributing to climate change.

And so I think these two things go hand in hand. In the same way that the issue of air pollution and disease is, in some ways, a way to get at the climate change issue if people aren't directly concerned about climate change. In China, frankly, part of the reason that people are—that the government there was willing to work with us, they're number-one priority is political stability. And what they started noticing was the number-one Twitter feed in China was the air quality monitor that was put out each morning by the U.S. Embassy. It was the single thing that more Chinese looked at than anything because people couldn't breathe in Beijing.

And smog is not the same as carbon dioxide, but it is generated by the same energy pattern usages. So, if that's people—if that's where people are at right now and they want to be sure their kids are healthy, then let's go after that. If they're interested in conservation as a way to start thinking about climate change, let's go after that. There are so many entry points into this issue, and we've got to use all of them in order to convince people that this is something worth caring about.

But at the end of the day, the one thing I'm absolutely convinced about is, everybody cares about their kids, their grandkids, and the kind of world we pass on to them. And if we can speak to them about our responsibilities to the next generation, and we can give people realistic ways to deal with this so that they don't feel like they've got to sacrifice this generation to do it, they have to put hardship on their kids now in order to save their grandkids—then I tend to be a cautious optimist about our ability to make change. But events like this obviously make a big difference and really help.

Ms. Hayhoe. Yes.

Mr. DiCaprio. Mr. President, Katharine, thank you so much for your time. I'm truly honored to premier this film here on the White House lawn. This—like I said, this was a 3-year endeavor. I learned so much and I'm going to let the film speak for itself as far as everything that I experience on this journey.

Thank you so much for your time. Let's give them a round of applause. Thank you.

The President. Thank you, everybody. Appreciate you. Thank you.

Mr. DiCaprio. Thank you all for showing up.

The President. Have fun, everybody.

Mr. DiCaprio. Enjoy the film.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:10 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In her remarks, Ms. Hayhoe referred to her husband Andrew Farley, lead teaching pastor, Church Without Religion in Lubbock, TX. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary included the complete remarks of Mr. DiCaprio and Ms. Hayhoe.

Remarks Following a Briefing on Hurricane Matthew Preparedness Efforts at the Federal Emergency Management Agency

October 5, 2016

Well, Administrator Fugate here at FEMA, as well as a number of other agencies, our Army Corps of Engineers, our National Guard, have just briefed me on preparations that we're making for the possibility of some serious effects from Hurricane Matthews.

Matthew could have—soon affect areas all across the Southeast. So, at my direction, FEMA has been on the ground in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina, working with State and local officials to prepare for the storm. We've already got response teams and supplies prepositioned and ready to help communities in the region.

I want to emphasize to the public: This is a serious storm. It has already hit Haiti with devastating effect. It is now in the process of moving through the Bahamas. Because it's not going to be hitting enough land, it is going to be building strength on its way to Florida. We anticipate that by tomorrow morning it will already begin to have significant effect in Florida and then has the potential to strengthen and move on up the coast during the course of the day.

So I want to make sure that everybody is paying attention to your local officials. If there is an evacuation order in your community, you need to take it seriously. We anticipate that not only is there still a chance that the core of the storm strikes Florida and some of the States further north, but even if you don't get the full force of the hurricane, we are still going to be seeing tropical-force winds, the potential for storm surge, and all of that could have a devastating effect.

So everybody needs to be paying attention and following the instructions of your local officials. And if you get an evacuation order, just remember that you can always rebuild, you can always repair property, you cannot restore a life if it is lost. And we want to make sure that we minimize any possible loss of life or risk to people in these areas.

I also want to make sure that we say thanks to the folks at the National Weather Service and the FEMA team for the outstanding work that they're doing here. Craig, just in case folks aren't aware, comes from Florida, is intimately familiar with the dangers of hurricanes, and it just so happens that he's got family in areas that could be affected by this storm. So this is personal for him. You know that he's going to be working around the clock to make sure that we are preventing any potential loss of life and trying to minimize as much as possible the impacts of this storm. But this is going to be a serious storm, and we want everybody to take it seriously as well.

Even as we prepare for the hurricane here at home, I want us to keep in mind that Haiti, one of the poorest countries in the world, already suffering from a range of previous disasters, has been hit really hard by this storm, and we anticipate that they are going to need substantial help. There may be similar needs in places like the Bahamas. So I would ask that people who are willing to contribute and willing to help to visit the Center for International Disaster Information. The website is CIDI.org—CIDI.org. You can find out how you can help make life a little bit easier for people who didn't have a lot to begin with and now are really getting hammered by this storm.

And last point for everybody in the potentially affected States: Even as you are waiting to get instructions from your local officials, now is the time for you to prepare in the event that you have to evacuate. Even if you don't have to evacuate—there is not an evacuation order—it still makes sense for you to figure out what kind of plan do you have, what kind of preparations and supplies do you have. And if you need help trying to figure that out, go to ready.gov—ready.gov—because that will give you some really clear instructions about how to make sure that you are securing your property and keeping your family safe, which is obviously the priority for all of us.

So this is something to take seriously. We hope for the best, but we want to prepare for the worst. And I would urge everybody in the affected States of Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina to pay very close attention to your local officials and the broadcasts that are going to be coming through over the next several hours. All right?

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:42 a.m. in the M–1 Conference Room.

Remarks on the Paris Agreement on Climate Change
October 5, 2016

Good afternoon, everybody. Today is a historic day in the fight to protect our planet for future generations.

Ten months ago, in Paris, I said before the world that we needed a strong global agreement to reduce carbon pollution and to set the world on a low-carbon course. The result was the Paris Agreement. Last month, the United States and China, the world's two largest economies and largest emitters, formally joined that agreement together. And today the world has officially crossed the threshold for the Paris Agreement to take effect.

Today the world meets the moment. And if we follow through on the commitments that this Paris Agreement embodies, history may well judge it as a turning point for our planet.

Of course, it took a long time to reach this day. One of the reasons I ran for this office was to make America a leader in this mission. And over the past 8 years, we've done just that. In 2009, we salvaged a chaotic climate summit in Copenhagen, establishing the principle that all nations have a role to play in combating climate change. And at home, we led by example, with historic investments in growing industries like wind and solar that created a steady stream of new jobs. We set the first-ever nationwide standards to limit the amount of carbon pollution that power plants can dump into the air our children breathe. From the cars and trucks we drive to the homes and businesses in which we live and work, we've changed, fundamentally, the way we consume energy.

Now, keep in mind, the skeptics said these actions would kill jobs. And instead, we saw, even as we were bringing down these carbon levels, the longest streak of job creation in American history. We drove economic output to new highs. And we drove our carbon pollution to its lowest levels in two decades.

We continued to lead by example with our historic joint announcement with China 2 years ago, where we put forward even more ambitious climate targets. And that achievement encouraged dozens of other countries to set more ambitious climate targets of their own. And that, in turn, paved the way for our success in Paris: the idea that no nation, not even one as powerful as ours, can solve this challenge alone. All of us have to solve it together.

Now, the Paris Agreement alone will not solve the climate crisis. Even if we meet every target embodied in the agreement, we'll only get to part of where we need to go. But make no mistake: This agreement will help delay or avoid some of the worst consequences of climate change. It will help other nations ratchet down their dangerous carbon emissions over time, and set bolder targets as technology advances, all under a strong system of transparency that allows each nation to evaluate the progress of all other nations. And by sending a signal that this is going to be our future—a clean energy future—it opens up the floodgates for businesses and scientists and engineers to unleash high-tech, low-carbon investment and innovation at a scale that we've never seen before. So this gives us the best possible shot to save the one planet we've got.

I know diplomacy can be [isn't always]* easy and progress on the world stage can sometimes be slow. But together, with steady, persistent effort, with strong, principled American leadership, with optimism and faith and hope, we're proving that it is possible.

And I want to embarrass my Senior Adviser, Brian Deese, who is standing right over there, because he worked tirelessly to make this deal possible. He and John Kerry, Gina McCarthy at the EPA, everybody on their teams have done an extraordinary job to get us to this point, and America should be as proud of them as I am of them.

And I also want to thank the people of every nation that has moved quickly to bring the Paris Agreement into force. I encourage folks who

* White House correction.

have not yet submitted their documentation to enter into this agreement, to do so as soon as possible. And in the coming days, let's help finish additional agreements to limit aviation emissions, to phase down dangerous use of hydrofluorocarbons, all of which will help build a world that is safer and more prosperous and more secure and more free than the one that was left for us.

That's our most important mission: to make sure our kids and our grandkids have at least as beautiful a planet and, hopefully, even more beautiful, than the one that we had. And today I'm a little more confident that we can get the job done.

So thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:30 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Remarks Honoring the 2016 Stanley Cup Champion Pittsburgh Penguins
October 6, 2016

The President. It is wonderful to be here. Welcome to the White House! And we are here to celebrate an extraordinary achievement: Phil Kessel is a Stanley Cup Champion! [*Laughter*] Hey!

We've got some special guests in the house, some big fans who are Members of Congress. We've got NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman. Gary, I have to say, I respect Lord Stanley, but I'm going to need you to explain to me how something called the President's Trophy is the not highest award a team can win. [*Laughter*]

But we're actually making some history here today. I am proud to be the first President to welcome to the White House eight Cup-winning teams, all of whom are based in the United States. I reminded the Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau—who we had a state dinner here—about that not too long ago. And that, of course, includes this year's outstanding champions. Let's give it up for the Pittsburgh Penguins.

So this is a nice bookend to my Presidency because the first year, you guys won the Cup. Now you're coming back for my final year. A lot has changed during the interim. Back in 2009, my hair matched the color of the puck more than the ice. [*Laughter*] "Sid the Kid" was actually a kid. [*Laughter*] And Geno was still snapping pictures with a flip phone. [*Laughter*]

But what I like best about this team's victory is that no one thought they could pull it off. I obviously sympathize with that; they said the same thing about me. [*Laughter*] Mike Sullivan started the season coaching the minor league team in Wilkes-Barre and Scranton. That's Biden country and Casey country. In late December, the Pens were closer to last place than first. Spirits were low. And when the team designed its 50th anniversary logo for the upcoming season, it referenced the franchise's three Cups because no one imagined they were about to win a fourth.

And then "GM of the Year" Jim Rutherford got to work. He was smart enough to see that Sullivan had coached in the Blackhawks organization, so he knew—[*laughter*]—he knew Sullivan brought a lot to the table. Goalie Matt Murray, a rookie, was a brick wall. The H–B–K line—none of whom were on the team last year—were so dominant that they earned their own sandwich at Primanti Brothers. [*Laughter*] The Pens went 14–2 down the stretch to finish second in the East.

[*At this point, a baby cried.*]

And then—don't worry, I don't have any more bad jokes. That poor thing. [*Laughter*] It's like, aww, these are so corny. [*Laughter*] Yes, I know. [*Laughter*]

And then they powered through three rounds, each tougher than the last, before taking care of the Sharks in six games, one of the most remarkable turnarounds in the history of the NHL.

Of course, leading the way was my fellow lefty, Sidney Crosby. Last time he was here, I took a cheap shot at Sid for his size. [*Laughter*] I wasn't the first one on or off the ice. Of course, since then, he's won two Olympic Golds, a World Championship, a World Cup

MVP, a Playoff MVP, another NHL MVP, a mountain of other postseason awards, even won an Emmy. And of course, he hoisted this trophy right here, his second Stanley Cup, to match his mentor, Super Mario. So, Sid, what an extraordinary accomplishment.

And obviously, nobody has to tell you his extraordinary achievements on the ice, but here's something worth mentioning. During the playoffs, defenseman Trevor Daley's mom was battling cancer. She told him that she was going to keep fighting so she'd see her son lift the Cup. Now, the captain always chooses who gets it second. It's a big honor. Sid surprised everybody, including Trevor, by handing it to him. Trevor's mom Trudy got to see her son skate around with it—on a broken ankle—and then passed away a few days later. And that's a testament to the kind of person Sid is, but also the kind of team this is.

All summer, these players shared the Cup with their families. Nick Bonino brought it to his grandparents' place, where they ate his Nana's famous tuna fish pasta out of it. [*Laughter*] He let his infant daughter Maisie sit in it. A Cup celebration spanning four generations—to paraphrase the legendary "Badger Bob" Johnson—that's "a great day for hockey."

And of course, the people of Pittsburgh love their Penguins, including their outstanding mayor. Bill, where are you? Is he—I heard he's here. Here he is! Bill Peduto. Four hundred thousand people welcomed them home from San Jose, the largest crowd for a sports parade in the city's history, which is saying something for the City of Champions.

Pittsburgh also appreciates this team, as do I, for what they've done in the community. A bunch of the players brought the Cup to Children's Hospital—in fact, it was Ian Cole's very first stop. Inspired by Michelle's "Let's Move!" initiative, the Penguins Foundation started Project PowerPlay to get more kids exercising, and now it's helping to restore city and county parks across Pittsburgh. The Foundation is also raising awareness about concussions for young athletes. And the Pens have been leaders in the Green Sports Alliance, making their facilities more energy and water efficient, lowering their carbon footprint as they travel. I want to thank Commissioner Bettman and the entire NHL for leading the way in environmentally sustainable sports, because we want to continue to have ice so that we can play hockey. [*Laughter*]

You guys are champions because of your persistence, because of your teamwork, the faith you have in each other. You've set a great example for the city and for the league. Keep up the great work on and off the ice. Have a great season.

And once again, let's hear it for the World Champion—or at least the NHL Champion, and we're going to call them the World Champion—Pittsburgh Penguins! [*Applause*] Hey!

Thank you. Sid, did you want to say anything?

Center Sidney Crosby. No, that's okay. [*Inaudible*]

[*The President was presented with a miniature Stanley Cup and team jersey.*]

The President. All right. That's a good—that's good looking. [*Laughter*] That's not bad. All right, let's strike the podium so that we can get a good picture of everybody. Come on.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:18 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Phil Kessel, right wing, Evgeni "Geno" Malkin and Nick Bonino, centers, Carl Hagelin, left wing, Mario Lemieux, co-owner, chairman, and former center, and Ian Cole, defenseman, Pittsburgh Penguins; Sen. Robert P. Casey, Jr.; and Jim and Nina Orsini, grandparents of Mr. Bonino.

Remarks Following a Briefing on Hurricane Matthew Preparedness and Response Efforts and an Exchange With Reporters

October 7, 2016

The President. Obviously, everybody has been tracking the course of Hurricane Matthew, and I just received an update from our FEMA director, Craig Fugate, as well as the rest of our national security team. And I just wanted to make a couple of key points.

First, what we're seeing now is Matthew having moved above South Florida and some of the largest population centers, working its way north. And the big concern that people are having right now is the effects that it could have in areas like Jacksonville on through Georgia. And although we've seen some significant damage in portions of South Florida, I think the bigger concern at this point is not just hurricane-force winds, but storm surge.

Many of you will remember Hurricane Sandy, where initially people thought this doesn't look as bad as we thought, and then suddenly, you get massive storm surge and a lot of people were severely affected. And so I just want to emphasize to everybody that this is still a really dangerous hurricane; that the potential for storm surge, flooding, loss of life, and severe property damage continues to exist. And people continue to need to follow the instructions of their local officials over the course of the next 24, 48, 72 hours.

Those of you who live in Georgia, I think, should be paying attention because there's been a lot of emphasis on Florida, but this thing is going to keep on moving north, through Florida, into South Carolina. There are large population centers there that could be vulnerable, so pay attention to what your local officials are telling you. If they tell you to evacuate, you need to get out of there and move to higher ground, because storm surge can move very quickly, and people can think that they're out of the woods and then suddenly get hit and not be in a position in which they and their families are safe. So pay attention to local officials.

In the meantime, I've been in contact with the Governors of all four of the potentially affected States. I want to thank them all for their leadership. There's been strong cooperation between Federal and State and local officials. FEMA has worked diligently to pre-position resources, assets, water, food, commodities. And as the hurricane moves north, what Craig and his team will be doing is moving those resources and assets further north so that any place that happens to get hit badly, we'll be in a position to immediately come in and help.

But I really want to emphasize the Governors have been on top of this. State and local officials have been on top of this. They are the ones who are tracking most closely what is happening in your particular community, your particular area. You need to pay attention to them. Do what they say. Do not be a holdout here because we can always replace property, but we can't replace lives.

I want to thank Craig and his whole team as well as Department of Homeland Security, my own national security team for really staying on top of this. We're going to monitor this throughout the weekend. Our thoughts and prayers are with folks who have been affected. It's—even if the damage in South Florida wasn't as bad as it could be, there are people who've been affected, and for them, they're going to need help.

Last point I'd like to make is, we're still tracking what happened in areas like Haiti that were hit more directly. Haiti is one of the poorest countries in the world. It has consistently been hit and battered by a lot of natural disasters to compound what is already great poverty there. We know that hundreds of people have lost their lives and that there's been severe property damage and they're going to need help rebuilding. So I would ask all Americans to go to the American Red Cross and other philanthropic agencies to make sure that we're doing what we need to do to help people in need. And we'll continue to provide information. If you're interested in how you can help the people of Haiti and others, you can go to

whitehouse.gov and we'll provide you some direction in terms of where. Even the smallest contribution can really make a big difference.

All right? Thank you very much, everybody.

Federal Emergency Management Agency Funding

Q. Sir, does FEMA have enough funding?

The President. FEMA is in a good position right now. We had some concerns last year when we were in the midst of budget negotiations. I think that we did a good job of making sure that FEMA was properly funded and, not to make him blush, but we happen to have one of the best public servants in America in Craig Fugate and his team, and they know how to manage their money and use it effectively.

So that's not going to be an issue. Of course, we always want to be cautious about making assessments with respect to damage. We're still on the front end of this hurricane. We're not on the back end. So we don't know how bad the damage could end up. We don't know how severe the storm surge could end up being. And we're not going to know for 3, 4, 5 days what the ultimate effects of this are.

If we end up having really significant problems and really severe property damage, then the Stafford Act comes into play, our ability to provide through emergency declarations and other mechanisms—more help to local governments—that's always going to be a question. We have, as you know, we still have flooding in Louisiana that has left a lot of people homeless. Over 100,000 people lost their homes there and we still have to rebuild. There are—is a backlog of need from natural disasters around the country that we'd like, hopefully during the lame duck session, to figure out how to fund effectively.

So the issue is not so much FEMA's funding for immediate emergency response; the issue is going to be making sure that after the—in this case the hurricane, but in other cases flooding or wildfires or other natural disasters—after they've happened, are we in a position to properly help people rebuild? And we'll obviously make those assessments after the fact, and then we'll talk to Congress about how we can help out.

All right? Thank you, everybody.

2016 Presidential and Congressional Elections

Q. Are you going to vote while you're in Chicago?

The President. I'm not going to the precinct. I'll probably do early vote. I'll fill out my form. Don't worry, I'll be voting.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:22 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Nathan J. Deal of Georgia; Gov. Nikki R. Haley of South Carolina; Gov. Patrick L. McCrory of North Carolina; and Gov. Richard L. Scott of Florida.

Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Luncheon in Chicago, Illinois
October 7, 2016

The President. Everybody, have a seat, have a seat. Come on, we're among friends. This is informal. [*Laughter*]

It is so wonderful to be home for the weekend. Michelle says hey. [*Laughter*] Michelle is at Camp David with her—she's got her own girls' weekend. [*Laughter*] But she misses all of you, and it's wonderful to see all of you.

We've got a lot of people here that I want to acknowledge, but I want to start, first and foremost, with Fred and Dan. Thank you so much for opening up your home. Fred is an early investor, an angel investor—[*laughter*]—in my political career, but that's true for so many others. And so we just could not be more appreciative of everything that he is doing.

In addition, sitting right next to him, is someone who has been my partner on everything good that I've gotten done during the course of my Presidency. She is smart, savvy, tough and lives out her values every single day, and I could not be prouder to call her a friend,

the leader of the Democrats in the House, hopefully, soon to be Speaker once again: Nancy Pelosi.

Somebody who is doing an outstanding job in a thankless job—[*laughter*]—the DCCC chair, Ben Ray Luján, is here.

I don't know how a Senator got in here. [*Laughter*] I thought people were properly vetted—[*laughter*]—but apparently, they allowed in just because he is such a wonderful man, our senior Senator from the great State of Illinois, Dick Durbin.

We have some incredible Members of Congress and that's why we're here, is to make sure that we're building on the great work that they're doing so I want to just acknowledge all of them. First of all, from the Great Quads area, Cheri Bustos. Out here from California, Anna Eshoo—along with her cousin Doris Nadder. [*Laughter*] I'm pointing out Cousin Doris because this is her 60th anniversary today. She left the guy at home—[*laughter*]—but it is her 60th anniversary. [*Laughter*]

Glenview, IL, resident Doris Moorad Nadder. I came to see you!

The President. I know! [*Laughter*] I'm just saying. [*Laughter*]

Congresswoman Robin Kelly is here. The only physicist in Congress, Bill Foster is here. Our dear friend, Jan Schakowsky, is in the house.

Two outstanding candidates for Congress, Brad Schneider. And I've got to give a special shout-out—when I was running for the United States Senate, we couldn't afford a lot of staff so we had to rely on these incredibly smart volunteers, and the person who did a lot of our policy work, I couldn't be prouder of him, he is now running for Congress, he's got a great shot—Raja Krishnamoorthi.

And although she is not running for Congress, she's running for an incredibly important position here in Illinois, and so I just want to acknowledge her—Kim Foxx is here.

So this is a pretty intimate group. We're all friends. I'm not going to give a long speech. I'm not going to spend a lot of time on Trump. [*Laughter*] Look, to some degree, I'm preaching to the choir here. But in case you hadn't noticed—[*laughter*]—the stakes in this election are extraordinary.

We have made unbelievable progress over the last 8 years: taking an economy that was in a tailspin and cutting the unemployment rate in half; creating jobs for 72 consecutive months; reducing poverty by the largest percentage since 1968; seeing wages increase by the largest percentage ever recorded over the last year; providing 20 million people with health insurance that didn't have it before; locking in a climate change plan that has actually reduced our greenhouse emissions, even as the economy has grown, and mobilizing 200 nations to join us in that effort.

None of this I could have done had it not been for the partnership with the Democrats in the House of Representatives. A lot of the work that we got done that saved the economy and put us on a clean energy track and ensured that health care got done was in those first 2 years when we had the Democratic majority. It was when we had a Democratic majority that we were able to significantly expand the help that we provide young people going to college, increasing the levels of Pell grants, making sure that we had a Consumer Finance Protection Bureau that is looking after consumers. A whole range of the initiatives around Wall Street reform that has made our financial system more stable. We could not have done that unless we had courageous, thoughtful Members of Congress in partnership with me.

Now, I'm confident that we will have an incredibly capable Democratic successor in the White House by the name of Hillary Rodham Clinton. And when I say I'm confident, I'm not overconfident. [*Laughter*] So we've still got a lot of work to do and nobody knows that more than she does. But even if we're able to maintain the White House, the ability of Hillary to build on the legacy that we've established these past 8 years is going to depend on, ultimately, what happens in the House, as well as our ability to take back the Senate.

And it's an uphill battle—Nancy is the first to acknowledge it—because of gerrymandering, because of population distribution, because during midterms we tend to have really

depressed voter turnout. But despite all that, we have incredible candidates, competitive races, and if we are able and willing to really bear down in this last month—if we are, as we say in church, cheerful givers—[*laughter*]—then I think we've got a real shot. And that will make all the difference in the world in terms of our ability to advance those elements of my agenda that we haven't been able to get done.

We still need to get immigration reform done. We still need to rebuild our infrastructure all across the country and put people back to work, and make this economy more productive. We still need to make sure that every very young child has access to early childhood education. We've still got work to do in terms of making sure that equal pay for equal work is realized in workplaces all across the country. We still have work to do in building on the clean energy legacy that we have established.

So, across the board, whatever your issue, the stakes could not be higher and I hope that all of you feel that same sense of urgency. I'm confident you do, but if there are any remaining holdouts here—[*laughter*]—who need to be persuaded, hopefully, when you leave here, you don't feel like you did what you were supposed to do and kind of checked that off the list, but instead, that you are even more enthusiastic and inspired, and you're willing to go out there and get your friends and neighbors and get them engaged and involved the way I know you can do, because you've done it for me.

All right? Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 p.m. at the residence of Fred Eychaner and Dan Whittaker. In his remarks, he referred to Richard S. Nadder, husband of Ms. Nadder; former Rep. Bradley S. Schneider; Raja Krishnamoorthi, president, Sivananthan Labs and Episolar, Inc.; Kim Foxx, candidate for Cook County, IL, State's attorney; and Republican Presidential nominee Donald J. Trump. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to President Juan Manuel Santos Calderon of Colombia

October 7, 2016

I want to congratulate my friend and partner Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos for being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The Nobel Committee made the right decision in welcoming his tireless efforts to bring a just and lasting peace to Colombia, sending a message that in a world of conflict the pursuit of peace must be supported and encouraged. As Colombia turns away from the longest running war in the Western Hemisphere, this award is a testament to President Santos' unwavering, courageous leadership through years of difficult negotiations. The Colombian people have shown extraordinary resilience over several decades, and they now have a chance to pursue a future defined by the progress that can come from a just and lasting peace.

Going forward, President Santos and the people of Colombia can continue to count on a partner in the United States. The United States was proud to support the negotiations in Havana and to announce a new chapter in our relationship, Peace Colombia, which will continue our bipartisan tradition of support to Colombia by providing a framework to reinforce security gains, reintegrate former combatants into society and extend opportunity and the rule of law.

The democratic vote this week is a reminder that there is still work to be done to realize the future for which President Santos and so many citizens are striving, but it's also a sign that the national dialogue Colombia needs is taking place now and is building on the momentum created by 4 years of difficult negotiations. President Santos and the citizens of Colombia are reshaping their country for the better, and I am pleased the Nobel Committee is recognizing their work as they keep pushing toward peace.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Termination of the Emergency With Respect to the Actions and Policies of the Government of Burma

October 7, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with subsection 204(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(b), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the "order") that terminates the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13047 of May 20, 1997, and revokes that order, Executive Order 13310 of July 28, 2003, Executive Order 13448 of October 18, 2007, Executive Order 13464 of April 30, 2008, Executive Order 13619 of July 11, 2012, and Executive Order 13651 of August 6, 2013.

The President issued Executive Order 13047 to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the actions and policies of the Government of Burma, in response to a deepening pattern of severe repression by the State Law and Order Restoration Council, the then-governing regime in Burma. In Executive Order 13047, the President also determined and certified that, for purposes of section 570(b) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1997 (Public Law 104–208), the Government of Burma had committed large-scale repression of the democratic opposition in Burma after September 30, 1996, and imposed a prohibition on new investment in Burma. The scope of the national emergency with respect to Burma was modified and additional steps were taken to respond to the threat posed by the actions and policies of the Government of Burma, and further actions were taken under Burma sanctions statutes, namely the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003 (Public Law 108–61) and the Tom Lantos Block Burmese JADE (Junta's Anti-Democratic Efforts) Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–286) (the "JADE Act"), in Executive Orders 13310, 13448, 13464, 13619, and 13651.

In the order, I have determined that the situation that gave rise to the national emergency with respect to Burma has been significantly altered by Burma's substantial advances to promote democracy, including historic elections in November 2015 that resulted in the former opposition party, the National League for Democracy, winning a majority of seats in the national parliament and the formation of a democratically elected, civilian-led government; the release of many political prisoners; and greater enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and freedom of association and peaceful assembly. With these advancements, U.S. national security and foreign policy interests no longer support the blocking of assets and other measures imposed by Executive Orders 13047, 13310, 13448, 13464, 13619, and 13651. For these reasons I have determined that it is necessary to terminate the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13047 and to revoke that order, and Executive Orders 13310, 13448, 13464, 13619, and 13651. While Burma faces significant challenges, including the consolidation of its democracy, the United States can, and intends to, use other means to support the government and people of Burma in their efforts to address these challenges.

I hereby report to the Congress that, pursuant to section 5(i) of the JADE Act, I have determined and certify that it is in the national interest of the United States to waive, and have waived, the sanctions described in section 5(b) of the JADE Act.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President's Weekly Address
October 8, 2016

Hi, everybody. Eight years ago, we were in the early stages of what would become the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes. It was a scary time. We didn't even know where the bottom would be.

But thanks to your hard work and your determination and some smart decisions we made, today's a different story. We turned a recession into a record streak of job growth, creating more than 15 million new private sector jobs and cutting the unemployment rate in half.

Getting wages to rise again was a harder task. Even before the recession, working Americans faced decades of slow wage growth. Between 1980 and 2007, real wages barely grew each year. But because the policies we've put in place are working, working families are finally seeing their wages and incomes rise too. Since 2012, wages have grown around 20 times faster than they did over the almost three decades between 1980 and 2007.

Last year, folks' typical household income rose by $2,800. That's the single biggest increase on record. And across every race and age group in America, incomes rose, and poverty rates fell. We lifted 3.5 million people out of poverty, the largest 1-year drop in the poverty rate since 1968.

What's more, lower- and middle-income families saw the biggest boost in incomes, in part because 18 States and the District, as well as more than 50 communities, have given millions of Americans a raise by raising the minimum wage. And States that have raised their minimum wage have seen stronger earnings growth in low-wage jobs compared to States that have not.

Strengthening benefits at work helps too. Last week, for example, I took action to make sure up to 1 million more workers can earn 7 days of paid sick leave on the job. We're also helping States expand opportunities for workers to save for retirement. But there's a lot more we should do to strengthen the middle class and help more Americans get ahead: making childcare more affordable, for example; making sure women earn equal pay for equal work; guaranteeing paid family and sick leave; increasing the Federal minimum wage; preparing workers for the jobs of the future; and closing tax loopholes that benefit just the wealthy and big corporations.

Now we just need a Congress that cares about these issues, one that will finally put politics aside and act on these commonsense ideas. And that's how we'll build on the progress we've made over these past 8 years and achieve one thing we should all agree on: securing a brighter future for all of our children.

Thanks, everybody, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:50 p.m. on October 6 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on October 8. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 7, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on October 8. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at a Fundraiser for Senatorial Candidate L. Tammy Duckworth in Chicago, Illinois
October 9, 2016

The President. Hello, Chicago! It's good to be home. Welcome to the South Side. South Side! And it is always good to be friends—to be with friends with so many people here who, as I look out across the room, have been there from the start, have been there from the beginning. And so Michelle wants me to say hello. She loves you. It was great to be in our house,

sleeping in our own bed. We were a little disoriented because the Cubs look like they might win the World Series. I noticed a bunch of my staff headed towards the North Side pretty early last night.

Hurricane Matthew

Before I get started, I just want to mention—because sometimes things get lost in the swirl—we all know that there's been a really serious hurricane down in Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia. People were hit. They weren't hit as directly as we had feared, but it has left a lot of devastation in its wake. Lives have been lost. Property has been severely damaged. And there's still continuing risk of flooding going on.

I've been in touch with the Governors of the affected States, and my team has been working to make sure that they're getting the resources that they need from the Federal Government. And even as TV cameras move on to the next story, we're going to be right where—with the people in need, to make sure that they're getting all the help they deserve. So, for the folks in Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia: The American people are with you in this time of need, and we're just going to keep on working to make sure that as the waters recede, that you're able to rebuild. And we're going to do everything that we have to do to make sure that we've got your back.

2016 Presidential and Congressional Elections

Now, before I do anything else, I also want to thank the hosts of this evening. First of all, John and Bonnie Atkinson, thank you. Marty Nesbitt and Anita Blanchard, thank you. And, Theaster Gates, thank you for your incredible hospitality and this great facility.

A couple other people I want to acknowledge. Dick Durbin in the house. Congresswoman Cheri Bustos is here. Robin Kelly is here. We love Robin. Tammy Duckworth, I'm going to talk a lot about her later. [*Laughter*] Just a couple other people I see in the audience. Running statewide, Susana Mendoza, is here. Where's Susana? We served together. She was in the House; I was in the Senate. And, of course, the ageless secretary of state, Jesse White, in the house. And when I was a senator, my State representative, Barbara Flynn Currie. I'm sure I missed a couple of people. It's not because I don't love you. It's because I'm getting old and it's dark here, so I can't see everything. [*Laughter*]

You may have noticed that when I got here on Friday, I was doing an event for the D-triple-C, and then I thought it would be a good time to just go ahead and vote. I'm not going to tell you who I voted for. It's private. [*Laughter*] You can probably guess. But here in Illinois, we're luckier than most. We don't just have one extraordinary candidate, we've got two extraordinary candidates at the top of the ballot. And I'm proud to call them both friends. Our next President, Hillary Clinton, and our next Senator, Tammy Duckworth!

And I've had the pleasure of knowing Tammy for a long time. I could not be happier that she's running for my old Senate seat, because I loved being your Senator; it was a great job. I got to spend time traveling across this great State: small towns, farmlands, the world's greatest city. And what I always explain to people is, Illinois is a microcosm of the country. More representative than any other State of the broad diversity of America. It's a place where Democrats and Republicans and Independents and people of good will of all races and faiths share certain bedrock values. If you rank 50 States across the categories of age and education, household income, race, religion, then the Land of Lincoln is the best mirror for who we are.

And I also learned that if you're willing to listen, it's possible to bridge a lot of differences. I learned that most folks know that issues are complicated and they're not solved by sound bites; that there's a need for both idealism and practicality; that you have to be able to be bold, but not reckless, and take responsibility. We know what can and cannot be compromised and even admit occasionally that the other side has a point.

And that's what convinced me in part to run nationally, because I believed that if you could

take some of that wisdom and apply it to our national politics——

[*At this point, a cell phone rang.*]

The President. Uh-oh. Is somebody calling? [*Laughter*] That's so embarrassing. [*Laughter*] That's all right. Where was I? [*Laughter*]

The notion was, is that if we could apply that same common sense and that same sensibility, the belief that we're all in this together—that we're not enemies, we're on the same team; we have differences, but those differences should and can and must be bridged—if we can apply that at the national level, then it would make an enormous difference. That's what led me to run for President. That's the vision that's guided me as your President. And I'm here to tell you that that's the vision that Tammy Duckworth shares. That's why all of you have to do everything you can to make sure that we send this outstanding Member of Congress to the United States Senate.

Look, all of you know Tammy's amazing story. She's the daughter of a veteran and the daughter of an immigrant. She was a war hero who lost both of her legs when a rocket-propelled grenade struck the Black Hawk helicopter that she was piloting in Iraq. But she never stopped serving her country after she got home. She is a tireless advocate on behalf of her fellow veterans. She's a working mom, a champion for the middle class. She's a tough lady, but with a big heart. And she is going to be a great Senator for Illinois.

I cannot think of a better person to represent this State that I love. And I know that it's a cliche to say that every 4 years, that this is the most important election in your lifetimes. This is the most important election though. [*Laughter*]

Think about where we came from and the road that we've traveled. Eight years ago, we were spiraling into the worst financial crisis and economic crisis the world had seen since the Great Depression, in the midst of two wars. Regard for the United States around the world was sinking precipitously. And together, we fought our way back: cutting unemployment in half; helping our businesses create more than 15 million new jobs; slashing our dependence on foreign oil; doubling our production of renewable energy; reducing the deficit by almost two-thirds; getting income rising again, poverty falling again; covering another 20 million Americans with health insurance so that we're cutting our uninsured rate to an all-time low. Bin Laden is gone. Marriage equality is a reality from coast to coast.

The work that we've been able to produce, even with all the obstruction, has been remarkable. But I'm telling you right now, all that progress is at stake in this election. We should be building on that success and creating even more progress. But if we don't do our jobs in this election, it could all be wiped away.

So we've got to elect leaders who are going to keep building an economy that works for everybody, not just for those at the top, but for folks at the bottom who are struggling to get into the middle class, and a middle class that's been hard pressed and is just now starting to see their wages and incomes grow. That's what Tammy believes in: an America that says, no matter who you are, where you come from, what you look like, what kind of disability you may have, what faith you are—if you work hard, you should be able to get ahead here in the United States of America.

So, when it comes to students, Tammy and I have a plan to make community college tuition free, if you're willing to work for it. She's fighting to help people refinance student—their student loans, expand Pell grants, make sure that there's not a striving young student out there that feels that finances are preventing them from being able to achieve their dreams.

When it comes to veterans, I don't have to tell you Tammy is a passionate advocate with a record to match, because she knows what it means for our veterans to have the kinds of services that they have earned and the way that they can serve America even after they've put away the uniform. That's why I chose her to serve as my Assistant Secretary of the VA, where she helped to cut homeless veteran—the number of homeless veterans in half. In Congress, she worked to put more vets back to work, to protect servicemembers from predatory lending. And with Tammy by my side, I

was proud to sign the Clay Hunt SAV Act to improve mental health care for our returning heroes. That is saving lives right now, and that's because of Tammy.

When it comes to seniors, Tammy has got a plan to make sure that Social Security benefits keep up with the cost of living. She'll pay for it in a responsible way by closing tax loopholes that benefit folks who, frankly, don't need another tax loophole. She's going to work to make sure that all Americans can enjoy security in their retirement.

And when it comes to improving relations between law enforcement and communities they serve—something that obviously is of great importance here—Tammy is working for comprehensive criminal justice reform that will make a difference. Everything from funding body cameras for cops to forgiving the loans of law graduates who serve their communities as prosecutors or public defenders. And she's going to invest in creating more jobs and opportunities for all of our young people. And I'm going to be working alongside her even after I'm finished being President to make sure that we're bringing those opportunities to all of Chicago, because our young people deserve it.

So that's what Tammy believes in. Don't let anybody tell you there's not a clear choice in this election. Tammy's opponent said no to free community college. He said no to allowing students to refinance their student loans. He's been silent on expanding overtime pay for hard-working Americans. Now, he has said "yes," but it was to turning Medicare into a voucher program. So that's the wrong answer. You should be saying no to that. His plan for the economy gives more tax cuts to the wealthiest among us and to companies that are shipping jobs overseas, while slashing investments in education, health care, infrastructure—all the things that would help us have a broad-based growth economy. Do you really think that he'd be a check on somebody like the guy running for President at the top of the Republican ticket? That he would be saying "no" to him? Are we really going to risk giving Donald Trump the majority he needs to roll back all the progress that we've made over the last 8 years? I don't think so.

Audience members. No!

The President. No. [*Laughter*]

One of the most disturbing things about this election is just the unbelievable rhetoric coming at the top of the Republican ticket. I don't need to repeat it; there are children in the room. [*Laughter*] But demeaning women, degrading women, but also minorities, immigrants, people of other faiths; mocking the disabled; insulting our troops, insulting our veterans.

That tells you a couple things. It tells you that he's insecure enough that he pumps himself up by putting other people down. [*Laughter*] Not a character trait that I would advise for somebody in the Oval Office. [*Laughter*] It tells you that he doesn't care much about the basic values that we try to impart to our kids. It tells you he'd be careless with the civility and the respect that a real, vibrant democracy requires. And it sure as heck tells you he's never met somebody as tough or smart or patriotic as Tammy Duckworth. If you want to see leadership, that's the kind of leadership that you've got to look for.

So the bottom line is this: If you want to send a message in this election, then you've got to vote for Hillary Clinton, and you've got to vote for Tammy Duckworth. If you want leaders who actually respect Americans and value hard work, if you want higher wages, better benefits, a fairer Tax Code, a bigger voice for workers, equal pay for equal work, stronger regulations on Wall Street, then you should vote for Hillary Clinton and Tammy Duckworth.

If you want a better kind of politics for our Nation, if you want common sense and a commitment to facts and reason and a belief that here in America, we're stronger together, then you've got to vote for Hillary Clinton, and you have to vote for Tammy Duckworth.

And all of that is going to require you. You're going to have to work. You can't take it for granted. Too much is at stake to get lazy or take it for granted right now. We've got to hustle. We've got to work. We've got to fight for it.

So I'm asking all of you to join me. I'm asking all of you to work your hearts out. It's only 30 days. Work hard. Get out there. But if you're willing to work hard with me, with Michelle—and by the way, if you don't work hard, Michelle might, you know—[*laughter*]—you don't want to mess up with Michelle, I know. If you're willing to do this for me, then I am absolutely confident that not only are we going to win an election, but more importantly, we're going to send a message to our kids about who we are. We're going to reaffirm what this country is about.

Look, one thing I've learned over the last 8 years is, a lot of problems are hard, and progress is rarely overnight, even in the great victories that we've had, like passing health care legislation that is improving the lives and saving lives of people right now. It's a grind. And you've got to battle it out. And whatever policies you put in place, they're not going to be absolutely perfect, and then you've got to tweak them and continue to work to expand and make them work even better. When you look at issues like climate change, you know that there's going to be—for every two steps forward that we take, there are going to be some folks who want to block progress. There's too much money in politics. We know that the lobbyists and special interests are still going to be having a big impact out there.

So democracy is not easy. It requires citizens who believe deeply that this form of government, the idea that we all have a voice and that we listen to each other and engage each other and we argue, but we don't demonize each other—that out of that process comes something better—it requires work; it requires commitment. It's the kind of service that Tammy Duckworth understands. She's made the kinds of sacrifices that most of us can't imagine. And the kinds of sacrifices she and her family are now making aren't as obvious, but they're just as meaningful, because ultimately, what she does is to show us what real patriotism means. She's showing us what true love of country means.

And for her to succeed, for Hillary to succeed, it's not enough just to mark a ballot box, although that's important. We're going to have to make sure that we've got their back every step of the way. And I can tell you, this has been the honor of my life serving as President. I am very much looking forward to life as a private citizen. [*Laughter*] But I will still be a citizen, and I will still have obligations. And I am going to be working just as hard, after a sizeable break and a lot of sleep—[*laughter*]—to make sure that we leave to the next generation the same kind of incredible inheritance that we received from our parents and our grandparents.

So let's get busy, everybody. Are you fired up?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Are you ready to go? Thank you, Chicago. I love you. Thank you, Tammy Duckworth!

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:58 p.m. at the Stony Island Arts Bank. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Nathan J. Deal of Georgia; Gov. Nikki R. Haley of South Carolina; Gov. Patrick L. McCrory of North Carolina; Gov. Richard L. Scott of Florida; John Atkinson, executive vice president and managing partner, Willis Towers Watson, PLC, and his wife Bonnie; Martin H. Nesbitt, cofounder and co–chief executive officer, Vistria Group, LLC; Anita K. Blanchard, professor of obstetrics and gynecology, University of Chicago Medicine; artist Theaster Gates; Sen. Mark S. Kirk; Chicago City Clerk Susana A. Mendoza, in her capacity as a candidate for Illinois State comptroller; Illinois State Rep. Barbara Flynn Currie; and Lamai Duckworth, mother of Rep. Duckworth.

Statement on the Observance of Yom Kippur
October 11, 2016

I extend my best wishes for an easy and meaningful fast as Jewish communities in the United States, Israel, and around the world observe Yom Kippur. The Day of Atonement is a

humble reminder to take stock of our shortcomings, but also a testament to our capacity to change and to grow, to lead a life of meaning, and to make a difference in the lives of others. Through our prayers, deeds, and character, we can do our small part to create a better future for ourselves and our world. On behalf of Michelle and our family, *G'mar Chatimah Tovah*.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in Greensboro, North Carolina
October 11, 2016

The President. Hey, North Carolina! Oh, this is a good-looking crowd! Now, I think I've got to take off my jacket. This is a—we've got some work to do. How you all been? It's good to be in North Carolina.

Let me begin by saying what an honor it was to have Judge Frye introduce me here today, the extraordinary work that he has done.

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you back. I do. I love North Carolina. I do. I always used to say, in North Carolina, people are so nice. In North Carolina, even the folks who didn't vote for me are still nice to me. [*Laughter*] I mean I—just some good people in North Carolina.

We've also got a number of outstanding elected officials who are proud to work for you each and every day. Your Representatives in Congress: Alma Adams is here; G.K. Butterfield is in the house; David Price is here; and your next United States Senator, Deborah Ross, is here. And although he couldn't be here this evening, I just want to mention your outstanding candidate for Governor, Roy Cooper. He is a good man, and he deserves your support. He is outstanding.

Now, those of you who have seats, feel free to sit down. If you don't have a seat, don't sit; you'll fall. [*Laughter*] But you don't have to. I'm just saying, your feet might get tired. I'm going to talk for a little bit.

Hurricane Matthew

I want to begin by thanking everybody in North Carolina for looking out for one another these past few days. As all of you know, a lot of communities are dealing with terrible flooding. Lives have been lost. And so the entire country has been thinking about North Carolina. Thoughts and prayers are with folks who are still dealing with rivers that are overflowing, homes that are being flooded. We made sure that FEMA was on the ground early.

Audience member. Thank you! Thank you!

The President. We've been making sure that the Governor, local and State officials all have what North Carolina needs to recover and rebuild.

And it is a reminder of what we do here in America, which is, we have to look out for one another no matter what. But when it comes to making sure that people are safe and cared for, there are no politics. Everybody has to look out for one another.

2016 Presidential and Congressional Elections

Now, this will probably be one of the last times I get to visit as President.

Audience members. No!

The President. It's okay. I'm going to come back more when I'm not President. Now I'm just allowed to come on business. I'm coming for fun in North Carolina next time I come.

But our term is coming to an end. Michelle and I—our lease was only for 8 years. And we're already looking around making sure we haven't broken any china—[*laughter*]—or messed anything up, Bo and Sunny haven't ruined any of the carpets because we want to get our security deposit back. [*Laughter*] You've been through that, right? Sometimes, these landlords, they'll look. They'll be like, look, oh——

Audience member. Bill Clinton's a rapist! Bill Clinton's a rapist! Bill Clinton's a rapist!

The President. Oh, no!

[*At this point, two audience members wearing T-shirts with an anti-Clinton slogan walked in front of the podium and then exited the venue.*]

Audience members. Boo!

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. You know, this is the great thing about politics in America. It just—it takes all kinds. [*Laughter*] Folks will just do all kinds of stuff. Now, where was I? See, those are some folks who were—they were auditioning for a reality show. [*Laughter*]

All right, all right. Hold on a second. Settle down, everybody. Settle down. Goodness gracious. I'm just trying to make a simple point here. [*Laughter*]

I wanted to say thank you for all the support that you've given us over the years. And I remember campaigning here in Greensboro 8 years ago.

It was in the closing days of another hard-fought campaign. We were still mired in two wars, living through the early days of what would end up being the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes. We were tackling challenges like health care and climate change that we had been putting off for a long time, and we had just been kicking the can down the road for way, way too long.

And when we look back 8 years later, we fought back from the recession. Our auto industry is setting new records: our businesses have turned job losses into 15 million new jobs; cut our unemployment rate in half; slashed our dependence on foreign oil; doubled our production of clean energy; incomes are rising; poverty is falling; uninsured rate at an alltime low; across America, you can marry whoever you love; brought our brave troops home to their families; delivered justice to Usama Bin Laden; shut down Iran's nuclear weapons program; opened a new chapter with the people of Cuba; brought nearly 200 nations together around a climate agreement that might save this beautiful planet for future generations; America viewed more positively around the world; setting the global agenda on the challenges of our times.

We—no wonder I've gone gray, because we've been busy. We've been busy. That's why I've got all this gray hair.

Audience member. You look good, baby! You look good, baby!

The President. I've been busy. But Michelle says I still look good though. That's what she says. That's what she tells me. Now, my daughters, on the other hand, they—what did they say? They said, well, you're dad cute. [*Laughter*] You're, like, cute for a dad—[*laughter*]—which is—that's the best you're going to do. So that's all right.

But I am telling you, Greensboro, all that progress goes out the window if we don't make the right choice just 4 weeks from today. The closer we get, the clearer the choice becomes. It's a choice between—is somebody hollering again?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. You know what. Here's the deal: Try to get your own rally! Try to get your own rally! You've got to get your own rally. [*Laughter*] See, if you can't get your own rally, don't come mess up somebody else's rally. We've got work to do here.

We've got a choice right now between somebody who is as qualified as has ever run for the office of President and somebody who, over and over again, has proven himself unfit to represent this country.

Look, Democrats and Republicans, we've always had our differences. That's the nature of a democracy. There is nothing wrong with that. When I was running against John McCain, when I was running against Mitt Romney, we had serious disagreements on the economy and on foreign policy and on social issues. And those elections were close and contested. And we had debates. But the truth is, although, obviously, I believed that the agenda that we set was the better agenda for America, I never thought that those people were not honorable. I did not think that they would—if they were in the Oval Office that America would spin out of control. I didn't think that they couldn't represent us on the world stage. I just thought they represented a different political party and a different philosophy.

But look—and I'm being honest here—that is not the case with the current Republican nominee. He doesn't have the temperament or the judgment or the knowledge or, apparently, the desire to obtain the knowledge or the basic honesty that a President needs to have. And that was true even before we heard about his attitudes towards women.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Now, of course, it was true when we heard what he thought about minorities and what he thought about people of the Muslim faith and when he made fun of disabled persons or when he insulted Gold Star families. But you don't have to be a husband or a father——

Audience member. Preach!

The President. ——to hear what we heard just a few days ago and say, that's not right. You just have to be a decent human being to say, that's not right. And if it makes you mad, if you say that's not somebody I want representing the United States of America, you can do something about it, North Carolina. Go to iwillvote.com, register to vote right away, and make your voice be heard.

Audience members. That's right! That's right!

Audience member. I will vote!

The President. Early voting starts next Thursday. And you can reject a dark and pessimistic vision of a country where we turn against each other——

Audience member. You know it!

The President. ——and turn away from our role as leaders in the world. You can reject fear and resentment and blame and anger and hate and choose the America we know: an America that's full of courage and optimism and generosity and ingenuity.

You know what, we've got real challenges. Families are still struggling to pay the bills, for all the progress we've made. Young people are still worried about paying off student loans or starting a career. There—even with Obamacare, the Affordable Care Act, there are still folks who don't have health care.

Audience member. That's right!

The President. There are still kids who are worried about their safety. And everybody is frustrated with political gridlock, and people are worried about racial division. There are pockets of America that still haven't recovered from factory closures. There are still young people who wonder whether they'll have the same opportunities that we had. But I tell you, I've traveled to every State in this Union over these last 8 years, and I've talked to tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions of people. And what I've seen consistently, and what I see right here in North Carolina, is what's right about America.

Audience member. That's right!

The President. I see people working hard. And I see people starting businesses. And I see people teaching kids. And I see people serving our country. And I see folks who are inventing new products and services and doctors coming up with new cures. And I see young people all across this country of every color and every background and every faith who are full of energy and ideas and are not going to be held back by what is, because they want to seize what could be, what ought to be. And I see Americans of every background and every faith who believe that we are stronger together—young, old, Black, White, Latino, Asian, Native American, folks with disabilities, men and women—all pledging allegiance to that same proud flag.

That's the America I know. And there's only one candidate in this race who shares those beliefs and who has devoted her life to it—a mom and a grandma who will do anything to make sure our children thrive; a leader with real plans to blast down barriers and break through glass ceilings and widen the circle of opportunity for every single American. And that is the next President of the United States of America, Hillary Clinton! That's who needs to succeed me in this office.

Now, if there's one thing I can tell you, Greensboro, it's—and I said this at the convention—nobody fully understands, including me, the demands of this job until you've actually sat behind the desk.

I thought I knew, but once—when you're there, suddenly, it's like, oh! [*Laughter*] Oh, the buck stops here. [*Laughter*]

And so, like, tweeting doesn't qualify you. [*Laughter*] Sound bites don't qualify you. Insults certainly don't qualify you. You—nobody can fully know what it's like to manage a global crisis or know the feeling of sending a young person into war. But I tell you, nobody has been closer to those decisions than Hillary.

Audience member. That's right!

The President. As a First Lady, as a Senator, as my Secretary of State, she knows what it means. She knows what it takes. I've seen her intelligence and judgment and temperament and her discipline. I saw her in the Situation Room, where she argued for the bin Laden mission. I saw it in capitals around the world, where she was tirelessly pursuing diplomacy that led to new partnerships that opened up new democracies.

She understands that the decisions you make in this job mean life or death, affect soldiers and veterans and workers who need a good job or a raise or a decent retirement. She understands that it counts for families who are trying to climb into the middle class or stay in the middle class and kids who are looking for getting a decent education. And she listens to people, and she keeps her cool——

Audience member. Yes, she does!

The President. ——and treats everybody with respect.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. And no matter how daunting the odds or how many times she gets knocked down, she doesn't point fingers or complain that everything is rigged if it doesn't work out the way you want it to. She doesn't check her mike. [*Laughter*]

[*The President tapped the microphone several times.*]

She just worries about getting up and working harder. And she doesn't quit. That's the Hillary I know. That's the Hillary I admire. That's why I believe that she is more qualified to be President of the United States of America.

And she's got real plans to address the real concerns that she has heard on the campaign trail. You watch these debates, and everybody is all, like, well, you know—the commentators afterwards, they're all like, "Well, she was really maybe explaining some stuff in great detail in contrast to the other candidate." That's because she actually knows what she's talking about, which is helpful when you're President of the United States, to know what you're talking about.

Come on, people. Come on. [*Laughter*] This isn't an audition for, like, some show. [*Laughter*] This ain't a show. She's got specific ideas to invest in jobs, to help workers share in their company's profits, to put more young people and children and toddlers in preschool, to make sure that students get through college without taking on a ton of debt. She actually is sweating the details. She cares about this stuff.

I remember 5 years ago, I asked every Cabinet Secretary to give me new ideas for ways to get our economy creating jobs faster because, at that point, Republicans were in charge of Congress; they weren't passing a lot of legislation. So we were trying to think creatively what we can do without Congress doing anything. And Hillary sent a 12-page, single-spaced memo, had footnotes. [*Laughter*] I was, like, Lord, let me—[*laughter*]. I had to do my homework.

But that's who she is. That's what she has spent her life doing: fighting for every child and every family. Not just popping off, but working to actually do stuff. Golly.

And by the way, Deborah Ross will do the same thing when you elect her to be your next Senator. She is a worker. She's heard your stories. She's going to fight to make sure working families have a fair shot, that our kids have a world-class education, that seniors have the secure retirement they have earned. And unlike, her opponent, she's certainly not going to keep standing with Donald Trump. Now, let me just make a comment on this.

Audience member. You go ahead!

The President. Let me—hey, can I say something? Okay. All right. Uh-oh, somebody is yelling at me again.

Audience members. Boo!

[*An audience member walked toward the podium, yelling and pointing at the President. He was then escorted out by security personnel.*]

The President. All right. Thank you. Thank you. He was okay. He's okay. You know what. This is our democracy at work. This is great. Hey, hold up, hold up a second. I heard some people booing. What have I said before? Don't boo——

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Don't boo——

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Don't boo——

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Okay. [*Laughter*] Because it doesn't really matter if some young man just runs across here and gets his 5 seconds of fame. What matters is who is voting.

But I'll get back to that later. I had another thing I want to talk about. Let me just say this. There is a—I do not believe that every Republican elected official thinks the way Donald Trump does. I think many of them do not. Hold on a second, let me make my point, now. [*Laughter*] It's good having a hype man or woman, but you've got to wait until I make my point before you hype it. [*Laughter*]

So the overwhelming majority of Republicans, they love their families, they love this country. They're good and decent people doing all kinds of good things. But what is true is——

Audience member. Democrats, no! [*Laughter*]

The President. What is true is that over the last 8, 10, depending on however long you want to say, if you've been only about obstruction, if in order to score political points, you tell your voter base crazy stuff, like I wasn't born here—[*laughter*]—or that I'm a Muslim or that—well, it's just a long list. [*Laughter*] And you just repeat it over and over again. All right. And so that your only agenda is negative, and you just make up facts. So, if 99 percent of scientists say the planet is getting warmer and this is something you should worry about, and then you bring a snowball into the Senate Chambers and say it was snowing outside, so you must be wrong, using that as evidence—[*laughter*]—to dispute scientists. That over time what happens is that you produce a nominee who is all about obstruction and insults and makes up his own facts.

Now, I don't think that's how the majority of Republicans think, but this is the habits that you get into that create this kind of nominee. And now you find a situation in which the guy says stuff that nobody would find tolerable if they were applying for a job at 7–11. Or you—I mean, I don't know what job if you were kind of vetting somebody for a job, and then you heard what somebody said on tape about women——

Audience member. Come on, President Obama! Tell it!

The President. ——set aside what they were saying about other stuff—that you would hire that person for that job. And the fact that now you've got people saying, well, we strongly disapprove, we really disagree, we find those comments disgusting, but we're still endorsing him, we still think he should be President—that doesn't make sense to me.

Audience members. No!

The President. Now, I hear, then, some people saying, well, I'm a Christian, and so I'm all about forgiveness because nobody is perfect. Well, that is true. I am certainly not perfect. Nobody is perfect. And I, too, believe in forgiveness and redemption. But that doesn't mean I'm going to elect the person President.

You know, if somebody does something terrible or shows themselves to be unqualified for office—[*laughter*]—I can forgive them, I suppose, if they're sincere about it. But I don't want them necessarily leading the country, right? So you can't have it both ways here. You can't repeatedly denounce what is said by someone, and then say, but I'm still going to endorse them to be the most powerful person on the planet and to put them in charge.

And so I just wanted to make that point—[*laughter*]—because there are still a number of Republican elected officials, some of whom I know ,and I'm sure are embarrassed and say, wow, that was a really terrible thing he said, but they can't bring themselves to say I can't endorse this guy. And by the way, why did it take so long for some of them to finally do walk away?

Audience member. That's right!

The President. I mean, we saw this coming. He's been saying really bad stuff for a while now. What did you think? He was just going to transform himself? [*Laughter*] I mean, I'm 55, and it's hard for me to change. I know at 70, it's going to be harder. [*Laughter*]

Anyway, I wanted to make that point. Let me get back on script here. So this—so setting aside character issues and what he said, he calls himself the best business guy who ever lived. But we've got a lot of business men and women around the country who succeeded without hiding their tax returns. Warren Buffett is a pretty good businessman. He just put out his tax returns.

I also don't know a lot of casino operators who manage to lose almost a billion dollars in a year. They say the house always wins. I don't know what happened. [*Laughter*] I don't know folks who use that failure, then, to avoid paying Federal income taxes for our troops and our vets and our roads and our schools. You don't brag about not paying your taxes. You don't say that makes you smart. No, that means you are not a responsible citizen, because those taxes are used to make sure that our veterans get the care they need or our roads get rebuilt or our students are able to get the support that they need to get an education.

When I hear somebody say they were rooting for the housing crisis because, hey, that's called business, or filed bankruptcy six times, which let him get out of paying for what he owed small businesses and their workers; when your concern isn't for the family facing the hardship of foreclosure or the small businesses and communities that depend on them, but rather how you might get over and make a buck off it, then, okay, you know what, maybe that's your kind of business, but that's not the spirit you bring to the highest office in the land. You shouldn't be President of the United States.

And a guy who has spent 70 years on this Earth showing no regard for working people is not going to suddenly be the champion of working people.

If you want a leader who actually values hard work and values working Americans; if you want higher wages and better benefits and a fairer Tax Code and equal pay for equal work for women and stronger regulations on Wall Street, then you've got to vote for Hillary. And you've got to vote for Deborah. That's what I'm talking about.

And if you're concerned about who's going to keep you or your family safe in a dangerous world, the choice is even clearer.

Audience member. Amen!

The President. Hillary has worked closely with our intelligence teams and our diplomats and our military. She'll see to it that our troops finish the job defeating ISIL. And she'll do it without resorting to torture or banning entire religions from our country. She's got the chops. She's got the temperament. She's got the knowledge to be the next Commander in Chief.

And then you've got the guy who insults POWs and attacks a Gold Star mom and calls our troops and our veterans weak. He doesn't know, apparently, the men and women in uniform who make us strong, and then brags—cozies up to dictators, tells our allies we might not be on their side unless they pay up first.

Look, he may not make good on his promises, but the United States of America has to make good on ours. And he might be up, I guess, at 3 a.m., but that's because he's tweeting insults at somebody who got under his skin instead of getting a decent night's sleep so he can be ready in the morning to do the job of being President of the United States.

Come on! He is not fit to be Commander in Chief. And he's certainly not fit to lead the world's greatest democracy.

Let me say this, and this has been remarked upon. And this is serious business. When in the middle of a debate you threaten to put your political opponent in jail, not—no trial, no indictment, no lawyers, no—just—[*laughter*]. When you welcome Russian meddling in our electoral process, then you're disregarding not just things like facts or evidence or a free press, but you're chipping away at basic values like

tolerance and due process and mutual respect. And our democracy doesn't work that way.

There are other nations around the world who operate like that. Their political systems operate like that. And those nations break down. We have stood in contrast and in opposition to those kinds of ideas. And I, frankly, never thought I'd see the day when we had a major-party candidate who would be promoting those kinds of notions.

Look, Greensboro, one thing I've learned these past 8 years is that progress is hard. It is a grind. You've got to battle it out. Even when we get victories like Obamacare, they're never perfect, and then you've got to keep on working to make them better. And when you take two steps forward on something like climate change, there are going to be folks who push back, and it's okay because that's what—that's the price of a democracy, is you don't get a hundred percent of what you want a hundred percent of the time.

Audience member. That's right! That's right!

The President. Democracy is not easy, especially not in a big, diverse country like this. You've got to work at it. And there's only one candidate in this race who understands that democracy in a big, diverse country doesn't work if you constantly demonize each other, and I mean that literally, by the way. There—I was reading the other day, there's a guy on the radio who apparently Trump is on his show frequently. He said me and Hillary are demons, said we smell like sulfur. Ain't that something?

Audience members. Boo!

[*The President sniffed his hand.*]

The President. Now, I mean, come on, people. [*Laughter*] This—democracy does not work if you just say stuff like that, or—and apparently, there are people who believe that stuff, and they're listening to it constantly. And you can't have leaders who are promoting that, because what happens then is, we get so divided, and people are so angry at each other that nothing gets done.

And Hillary understands that. She understands that on most big issues, it's not always simple black and white. Things getting done requires compromise even when you're a hundred-percent right, you think. She knows that for progress to happen, we have to listen to each other, and we have to see each other. We have to fight for our principles, but we have to also fight to find common ground.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. And she believes that we can and should conduct ourselves better. And you know, that's not always flashy. It doesn't always attract headlines. And our politics doesn't always make that easy. We want progress right away, our way, and if somebody is getting in our way, then we start calling them names. And the press finds it attractive to promote conflict, and that's the flashy headline. But I promise, here's the thing, if we just—if we're willing to work at it, progress does happen.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. And if you don't believe that, ask the 20 million more Americans who have health care today that didn't have it before. Ask the marine who proudly serves his country without having to hide the husband he loves. Ask the young people who got more Pell grants and help to get a college education. Change takes time, but change is possible.

And here's the last thing, Greensboro. It doesn't just depend on one person, it depends on all of us. And I especially want to talk to the young people here for a minute. You've been through a lot in your young lives. You've grown up through war, and you've grown up through recession, and you've grown up through all kinds of incredible changes. I mean, it was just a little bit ago that there was no such thing as a smartphone, which I know seems insane to you. But it's true. We survived without them. [*Laughter*] So things have just been happening fast.

But what I've seen from young people is that you care about looking out for each other, not turning on each other. The young people I meet, they are more tolerant, and they are more sophisticated, and they are more interested in the world. And you want to be active and engaged in the work of creating a vibrant and innovative and inclusive and mobile society and a democracy that works. And when I

meet young people, as strange as this seems, I see the values that my mom and my grandparents tried to instill in me: decent, honest, hard-working, civil, courteous, polite, "yes, ma'am," "no, ma'am," "how can I help you, ma'am." I see those values in this next generation. Those values aren't old fashioned.

When I see people who say they're conservative, well, you know what, my grandparents were kind of conservative. But to them, that meant that, like, you acted right. It meant you had good home training. It meant you didn't say crude things just to get attention. And I think most young people understand that. They understand those values that are timeless. They're not even Democrat or Republican; they're American values that bind us together as a country.

And so, yes, there are a lot of things about our politics that can sometimes seem cheap and trivial and frustrating. I know. I've seen it. But here's a chance to reject a divisive, mean-spirited politics that would just take us backwards. And you know there's nothing cheap or trivial about that, about making that statement: the chance to elect a woman who has spent her entire life trying to make this country better, that's real. That is true.

And young people, you have a chance to do that. So don't fall for the easy cynicism that says my vote doesn't matter or all politicians are the same, because that's exactly what Hillary's opponent wants you to think so you don't vote.

I promise you, your vote matters. Read up on your history. You just heard from Judge Frye. There was a time, right here in North Carolina, and just look, that judge, he looks good. I mean, he was right there before you, young people, and he couldn't vote. There was a time when folks had to guess the number of jelly beans in a jar, the number of bubbles on a bar of soap. It wasn't that long ago where folks were beaten to register voters in Mississippi. It wasn't that long ago that a man like Justice Frye, who had already graduated college, was denied the right to vote because he failed a so-called literacy test. That just happened. And the reason it changed was because young people said it's going to change. And folks risked everything so we could pull that lever. Freedom Riders came down so that people could have the right to vote.

So I—whatever the issue you care about, the choice could not be clearer. If you care about inequality, if you supported Bernie in the primaries, you've got a choice. You can vote for somebody whose economic policies are driven solely by greed and self-interest, or you can vote for somebody who is going to make sure our economy works for everybody, not just folks at the top, who will fight like heck to make sure minimum wage workers get a raise, and women get paid the same as men for doing the same job.

If you care about criminal justice reform, you can vote for somebody who has fought against civil rights and equality his entire career, or you can vote for somebody who started her career going undercover from school to school to make sure minority kids were getting an equal shot at a good education and who has not stopped fighting for justice and equality ever since.

If you care about the environment and climate change, you can vote for somebody who says it's a Chinese plot—[*laughter*]—and puts a climate denier in charge of hiring folks at the EPA, or you can vote for somebody who believes in science and will keep America a world leader in fighting to protect our planet.

If you care about immigration reform, you can vote for somebody who apparently only see immigrants as criminals and rapists to be rounded up or kicked out, or—even though, by the way, they've already paid more taxes probably than he has—or you can vote for a granddaughter of an immigrant who believes everybody deserves a chance to contribute to this country we love.

If you care about transparency, you can vote for a candidate who's released decades' worth of her tax returns or the only candidate in decades who refused to release any at all.

One candidate has a foundation that saved countless lives around the world. The other took money that people gave to his charity to buy a 6-foot-tall painting of himself. [*Laughter*] I'm not kidding.

One candidate traveled more countries than any Secretary of State before. The other is Donald Trump. [*Laughter*]

So, when he asks you, what do you have to lose? The answer is, you've got everything to lose. All the progress we've made these last 8 years is on the ballot. Civility is on the ballot. Respect for women is on the ballot. Tolerance is on the ballot. Justice is on the ballot. Equality is on the ballot. Democracy is on the ballot. If you want to send a message in this election, make it a resounding message.

Turn back the forces of racism and misogyny, and send a message for progress. Send a message for facts. Send a message for reason. Send a message for hope. Send a message by voting for Hillary Clinton. Send a message for Deborah Ross. Send a message about who we are as the American people and make our kids proud.

Thank you, Greensboro. I love you. Let's get to work.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:15 p.m. at the White Oak Amphitheatre. In his remarks, he referred to former State Supreme Court Justice Henry E. Frye, Attorney General Roy A. Cooper III, and Gov. Patrick L. McCrory of North Carolina; Democratic senatorial candidate Deborah Koff Ross; 2008 Republican Presidential nominee Sen. John S. McCain III; 2012 Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney; Sen. Richard M. Burr; Warren E. Buffett, chief executive officer and chairman, Berkshire Hathaway Inc.; Ghazala Khan, mother of Capt. Humayun Khan, USA, who was killed in Iraq in 2004; radio show host Alexander E. Jones; Sen. Bernard Sanders, in his former capacity as a Democratic Presidential candidate; and Myron Ebell, director of the Center for Energy and Environment, Competitive Enterprise Institute. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Remarks During a Panel Discussion at the White House Frontiers Conference at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
October 13, 2016

Ariadne Labs Executive Director Atul Gawande. Well, they tell me, Mr. President, to treat you like any other panel member.

The President. That's exactly right. [*Laughter*]

Dr. Gawande. I'm, like, right, okay. We'll try it, right? So I'm Atul Gawande. I'm a surgeon, I'm a public health researcher, and a staff writer at the New Yorker. I'm the executive director of Ariadne Labs, a health systems innovation center at the Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Chan School of Public Health. I'd like to welcome you. I'm the moderator today for this panel. To my left is a lawyer. [*Laughter*]

I want to start, actually—you challenged us, in your talk and in what you wrote in Wired, to think bigger. So I want to start with each of you, and I'm going to ask you what you think the big opportunity is. And so first is Kaf Dzirasa, M.D., Ph.D., extraordinary—he's a rare bird. He is a psychiatrist, he's a neuroscientist, and he's trained as an engineer as well. He's on the faculty at Duke, and I want you to tell us what you think the big opportunity is for the future.

Duke University Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences Kafui Dzirasa. Yes, I think the big opportunity is for us to begin to think of the brain as an engineered system. So I will give an example of what I mean. Let me—if I look out into the crowd and I say, anyone who's excited of voting in the next few weeks, put your hands up. So let me—there we go.

The President. Come on, everybody. [*Laughter*] Let's get something to vote for.

Dr. Dzirasa. That's right. [*Laughter*] So let me talk about what happened in that.

[*At this point, Dr. Dzirasa made brief remarks, concluding as follows.*]

So, as we begin to think about these illnesses, whether it's Alzheimer's or autism, the

challenge is, we're talking about a system that evolves so quickly and information is processed in multiple areas to generate behavior. The first time I heard someone describe the brain that way, I was a junior in college at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. And we had—invited a speaker, and he was one of my childhood heroes, he was a neurosurgeon. He will go unnamed. [*Laughter*]

The President. I know who you're talking—really good surgeon. [*Laughter*]

[*Dr. Dzirasa made additional remarks, concluding as follows.*]

Dr. Dzirasa. And so I decided to pursue an interest in psychiatry, and as I sat there with families who were experiencing some of the same challenges that my family was experiencing, I realized that we just needed a breakthrough in how we think about and how we treat mental illness. That big breakthrough, I think, for me, is going to come through this brain initiative. The—it's the opportunity for engineers to engage in how we think about mental illness, to map out how the brain is processing information in real time, the activity of all of these cells. The promise is that one day we'll have a new form of treatment that becomes—that comes out of reading information from the brain, generating neuroprosthetics, in the same way that individuals are now moving their hands by thinking about it. Can we augment brain function in a way that allows those with mental illness to come out of the shadows and to continue to contribute to this great American system? So——

The President. That's great.

Dr. Gawande. Thank you for that. I'd like to introduce Riccardo Sabatini, who is a Silicon Valley quantum physicist who has turned his training to using machine learning around genomics and health at Human Longevity, Incorporated. I want you to tell us what you think the big opportunity is.

Human Longevity, Inc., Research Scientist Riccardo Sabatini. Yes, so I think one of the most exciting thing that happened in last 20 years is that we digitalized life. We took—we opened up biology to computation. And that happened in the middle of my studies. I'm a quantum physicist. I was working on nanotech for the longest time. And I realized all of a sudden that I could move my expertise, my numerical modeling, on life, on biology, on genomics. Near 2000, as a human species, we started to read our own code. This is a camera moment in science. And you, Mr. President, gave a Medal of Science to the very two people that helped, Francis Collins and Craig Venter. This allowed to take completely different techniques to study how our biology works. It's the hardest problem that we will ever face and that we ever encountered. But we are learning. We are taking AI, we are taking machine learning, quantum mechanics, and we are virtualizing parts of our biology to understand how a specific molecule, a drug, works on just your body, how another molecule can hit your specific cancer, extracting the genome of your cancer. We are learning how to read the weak signals, very, very early stage, to understand if we can predict some pathology that is growing and intervene fast.

And this is a fascinating field, because it's the very field where numerical computation is saving life every day. It's the moment where we can predict and act at the same time. And this—when I saw this opportunity, I think is really—last century was about the atom, the next century is going about—is going to be about biology. Digitalizing allowed me to work in this field. And what I'm excited about is keeping going, virtualizing the human being better and better, understanding better and better, and taking this knowledge, opening up for all the community and all over the world, scaling down the prices, as we did with the genome sequencing, allowing more knowledge, and taking on board linguistics, physicians, physicists, mathematicians. This is the most important problem we have as a species, and we're going to crack it.

The President. That's great.

Dr. Gawande. Fantastic.

Mr. Sabatini. Thank you.

Dr. Gawande. I'd like to introduce Zoë Keating, who is not a scientist.

Patient advocate Zoë Keating. No.

Dr. Gawande. Zoë is, first of all, an amazing San Francisco cellist and composer. She's someone who's had number-one classical recordings. At the same time, she's someone who had a journey with the health care system with her husband, who had a devastating cancer, and has been thinking a lot, as a patient advocate, about what that experience has meant. And so I wanted to ask you, from what you went through, what is the opportunity—what is the big opportunity that you see for the future?

Ms. Keating. Well, I'll tell you the story, but I'll tell you the summary first. And in a nutshell, it's, like, how can we make lives better for patients? How can we ease suffering? How can we end the suffering? That's what it's about. And our story was that my husband, in 2014, was diagnosed with stage-4 lung cancer. And it took 5 months and three different doctors to find it.

[*Ms. Keating continued her remarks, concluding as follows.*]

But if I could just say something else about patients, it's that during our journey, we never had the sense that there was one person keeping track of all the data, that if there was data—and I tried really hard to digitize all my husband's and get it to where it needed to go—how could I—where do I put it? Who do I give it to? Who do I trust? And in this future scenario, I can imagine where I would go into the doctor's office and they would know everything about me. And I would imagine there would be some AI that had done some, like, analysis on my data to, like, pop some things up for the doctor. But still there's a human. No matter how much technology you have, there's a human at the end of it to help a patient through their journey and to keep track of it all and to think about, like, their caregivers, their life, everything. It's all a big package. It's not just patients or the users. So——

Precision Medicine/Cancer Research/Health Care Reform

Dr. Gawande. If I were to tie together—it sounds incredibly disparate, but the story that is coming out from everything you're saying—I'm going to take what you said, Riccardo, about the last century, one step farther. The last century was the century of the molecule. We were trying to—the power of reductionism—boil it down to the most small possible part: the atom, the gene, the neuron. Give me the drug, the device, the superspecialist. And that provided enormous good.

But in this century, what they're all describing is, now we're trying to figure out how do they all fit together. How do the neurons fit together to create the kinds of behaviors that you're to solve in mental illness? How do they fit—the genes network can fit together in epigenetics to account for the health and disease of the future that we all may face? And Zoë is describing a superhighway of information and science that is plugging into the patient through a bike path called the doctor's office.

And trying to make a system that can actually bring it all together really is a completely different kind of science from the last century. It's surrounding these problems. Who—with people come from incredibly different perspectives. Now, Kaf, you're all of them in one. We normally might bring a psychiatrist and an engineer and a neuroscientist together. [*Laughter*] And maybe—but it really isn't the age of the hero scientist anymore.

And so I want to ask you: What do we have to reinvent about the way we do science to make all of this possible, genuinely, scientifically, with real innovation?

The President. Well, first of all, I want to thank the panelists, especially Zoë's, because of the story you're telling. Although, Kaf, it sounds like you were also inspired in part because of very personal experiences. At the end of the day, they're people who count and who we want to enhance their lives. And so being able to bring it down from 40,000 feet down to what you're experiencing while you're waiting on the phone to help somebody you love so deeply, I think, is a good reminder of why we do this.

As you say, Atul, what we've been calling this Precision Medicine Initiative is really: how do we stitch together systems that can

maximize the potential of the research that a Kaf or a Riccardo are doing and end up with Zoë's husband getting better treatment? And a couple of things that we've tried to do that I think are helping.

Number one, is to make sure that the data that is being generated by genomic sequencing, as its price comes down, is better integrated and better shared, which is going to require us rethinking research models.

In the past, what's happened is, is that if a researcher wants to look into cancer, they get some samples from an arrangement, maybe, with a teaching university close by, and they're plugging away, somewhat in isolation. And what we now have is the opportunity to—as we discover, particularly, that what we think—used to think of as cancer might turn out to be 20 different types of cancer—we're now in a position where we can actually generate a huge database. And as a consequence, not only identify some of the specific features of that cancer, not only identify what kinds of genetic variants might make you more predisposed to that cancer, but we're also breaking down those silos in such a way where we can accelerate research. Not everybody has to have one small sample. Now, potentially, we've got a million people who are contributing to a database that somebody like a Kaf or a Riccardo can work off of.

And what that allows us to do in developing cures is, over time, as Riccardo said, to identify, first of all, do you have a predisposition towards a particular disease, and can we intervene more quickly before you develop it? Second, can we develop better cures, interventions, as Kaf said. But third, are we also in a position to get this information to patients sooner to empower them so that they can be in charge of their own health? Because part of our goal here is to shift from what is really a disease care system to an actual health care system.

So that's one big chunk of the initiative. And just to be more specific, part of what we're doing with the Precision Medicine Initiative is to get a bunch of collaborators to start digitalizing, pooling, and sharing their data. Within the VA, we've got half a million folks who sign up and are contributing their genetic samples.

We now have more and more institutions that are coming together. And as a consequence, our hope is, is that if you are a cancer researcher in any particular cancer, you're going to have a big data set that you can start working off of. And by the way, we're being very intentional about making sure that we're reaching out to communities that sometimes are forgotten—whether it's African American communities, women—so that we can really pinpoint what works for who.

Dr. Gawande. Can I try pushing on some of that?

The President. Just one last thing——

Dr. Gawande. All right.

The President. ——I want to say, though, because it goes to what Zoë said about systems. Even as we're doing all this cool stuff to come up with greater cures, what we're also having to do is try to figure out what are the incentives—the perverse incentives—that are set up in the health care system that prevent it from reaching a patient earlier. So I'll just give two quick examples.

The first is what you were talking about in terms of your individual patient data. We're trying to promote the notion, number one, that this data belongs to you, the patient, as opposed to the institution that is treating you. Because once you understand that it's yours and you have agency in this process, it means that as you're looking for different treatment options, as you're consulting with different doctors, you're able to be a more effective advocate without having to constantly fill out paperwork and so forth. So that's important.

And one of the things that we've discovered is, is that even the software where your individual patient data is stored, because it's a commercial enterprise oftentimes, is non-—it's not interoperable, it's not sharable in an easy form. And so we've actually been trying to get some of the major providers to start working together so that it makes it easier for somebody like Zoë, if she's moving from system to system.

The second this is—and, Atul, you've written about this—to the extent that we are reim-

bursing doctors and hospitals and other providers based on outcomes rather than discrete services that are being provided, we can start incentivizing the kind of holistic system thinking in health care—rather than you come in, you get a test, then you've got to go to another place to do this, and then you've got to go to another thing to do that, and then maybe the surgeon hasn't talked—spoken to the primary care physician and you don't have the outpatient coordination that would make sure that you're not coming back into the hospital.

And one of the things that we've been trying to do with the Affordable Care Act, Obamacare, that hasn't gotten as much attention as just providing people insurance is to make sure that we're pushing, we're nudging the system more and more to do that.

So that was a long answer—[*laughter*]—but it's a big topic. The good news is, is that I think we've identified the pathways where we can start making real progress.

Cybersecurity/Privacy of Health Records

Dr. Gawande. I want to live in your world. I want to live in the world where——

The President. I'm only going to be here for 4 more months. So—[*laughter*]. Three and a half.

Dr. Gawande. ——in a world where I get to own—I have my genomic information, I have my medical records, I have—everything about me belongs to me, and it's easy to access, and I can bring it to the doctors that I need it to get to.

The second level, you announced an initiative today, the All of Us Research Initiative, where you would be able to, A, get that data and then share it with researchers so that they can learn more from you, trusting that that data is safe. I had worked in the Clinton administration, and I got notified that my background records, my clearance records were hacked, right? If you can hack all of my background records now, suppose you can hack my genetic information, all of my electronic records, my mental health information and more. And being able to trust—so we're in this world where the system—having system science only works if it's transparent and information is widely available. And yet we're in deep fear about what happens with information and making it widely available.

I'd love to hear what you have to think about that. And I'm going to jump to Riccardo and think in a variety of worlds that you've been in, how do we trust that this research is in the right hands?

The President. I'll be very quick on this. This is going to be a ongoing problem that we have across disciplines. It's not just in health care. As Riccardo said, our lives become digitalized. It means that how we provide security for that information—whether it's financial, health, you name it—is going to be challenging.

Now, the good news is that we are making real progress in understanding the architecture that we have to build across sectors, private and public, in order for—to make this work. In fact, our outstanding president of Pitt has been working with our cybersecurity committee to really crack some of these problems. And we've put some guidelines for the private sector and providers to assure best practices on cybersecurity. But it is going to be something that will be increasingly challenging.

Here's the only thing I would say though. The opportunities to hack your information will be just as great or greater in a poorly integrated, broken-down health care system as it will be in a highly integrated, effective health care system. So I think it's important for us not to overstate the dangers of—the very real dangers of cybersecurity and ensuring the privacy of our health records. We don't want to so overstate it that that ends up becoming a significant impediment to us making the system work better. All right?

Dr. Gawande. Are there technological solutions, Riccardo, to this problem of privacy?

Mr. Sabatini. Yes. So we started to—one of the questions we started about a year ago is exactly, can we identify someone from his own genome? So we started to build a class of algorithm to predict and extract information from your genes, some common traits: your height, your eye color, your skin color, the structure of your face. Every single model has its own

limitations, sometimes for the lack of data, sometimes because the data is not only in your genes.

But what we learned is that using them collectively, we can go a long way to really identify a person from his genome. So this is something that we have to face, is a digital asset that is one of the most complicated ways to be handled. We want to publish it, we want to share it, but it's still something—there is some concern about identity and security.

[*Mr. Sabatini continued his remarks, concluding as follows.*]

So we need to remove a fear and allow people to engage more in their own health and in their own data. There are technologies to keep them safe and to keep them secure. The one thing that is very important is overcoming this barrier of knowing yourself, which I think is the most—is the hardest hurdle to scale up the databases. Security—there are the best people working on it across the border, both in the scientific domain and governmental domain. But this should not be a limitation to access your own information and feel comfortable to own your own information and feel comfortable to share it with governmental infrastructure and with companies that are implement the security right.

Technological Innovation/Health Care Reform/Accuracy of Online Information/Climate Change

Dr. Gawande. At the center of this, I think, is a question about optimism and pessimism about whether we can solve these problems. And I think I would like to ask a question of all of you about our values, the scientific values of a scientific orientation. And behind that orientation is a fundamental belief: We have an allegiance to the idea that the way you discover, the way you explain nature, the way you describe the world, the way you intervene in the world is through factual observation and through testing. And there's a certain sense of—it's an orientation, it's a way of being that we're describing. It's an openness, it's an inquisitiveness, it's curiosity. It's a willingness to acknowledge good arguments and recognize ones that are bad and that haven't tested out.

And that orientation feels like, at times—on the one hand, it's been the most powerful, collective enterprise in human history, the scientific community. And at other times, it feels embattled. And I wonder why. Why does it seem under fire when we're—you mentioned, President Obama, that in certain areas like climate change or around nutrition or around other parts of medical care, we have enormously fraught debates? And it feels at this moment almost like we're not just debating what it means to be a scientist, but what it means to be a citizen.

What do you take away, Kaf and Zoë, about where we are, and why are we under fire, and how do we get past this?

Dr. Dzirasa. I think, in a lot of ways, science, the outcome changes perspective, right? So, when science is useful, we don't have people arguing about whether polio vaccines are great or not, right? And so I think there are a lot of areas in medicine where we face this challenge. I actually think debate is very healthy for science. Right? I think contentious debate can actually be very helpful for science, in the same way our country was set up in way that healthy, constructive debate can be extremely useful.

I think what we want to do, especially as neuroscientists, I think we're at a place where we need to draw as many people in as possible and have healthy, constructive debates about how we get the outcomes we want.

[*Dr. Dzirasa continued his remarks, concluding as follows.*]

So we're at a place now where we're going to have to bring in other disciplines to know how to handle that data. I sat with a high school kid last night, Gabe, and it was pretty clear to me that the people who were going to solve this challenge of the brain are probably in, like, seventh or eighth grade right now. Right? And so how do we create an ecosystem where all those different perspectives can come in. The utility is, when all those different perspectives come in, there has to be conten-

tious debate, right? But I think the solutions that will come out of it are what will move people's perspective on the usefulness of science.

Dr. Gawande. Zoë, what do you think about the constructive debate you hear, how we get to the more constructive debate, and enough optimism that we want to actually put funding into the kind of work that Kaf is talking about?

Ms. Keating. Well, I think of just making it broader. I was really inspired this morning by a lot of the speakers on the health track, and one of them was Steven Keating, who's not related to me at all—another Keating—and I was really struck how—he was a Ph.D. student, and he was doing 3–D printing. And he wanted to study his brain tumor, because he had a brain tumor. But in order to study his tumor, he had to become a medical student in order to get some of the tumor so he could study it.

And that seemed really—like, wow, that's limiting. Think of, like, all these amazing people we have in our country who are doing things, and increasingly, people are doing things outside of institutions. And I feel like that's where solutions are going to come from. Like, I think that we should also look at Silicon Valley. I was thinking about patients and how the whole patient issue I was having is kind of like a user-experience problem that somebody might tackle at a software startup, and maybe we should approach these things from different perspectives that way.

And I think that's part of this trust—you were talking about trust in data—that somehow expanding, bringing in voices, figuring out how people can contribute data, how we can all just be more involved will be a way towards making trust. The same thing is true with government. So—[*laughter*].

The President. No, absolutely. Well, I'll just pick up on a couple of themes. Any scientific revolution is, by definition, contesting the status quo. And we're going through a period in which our knowledge is expanding very quickly. It is going to have a wide range of ramifications and you've got a whole bunch of legacy systems that are going to be affected. So, if self-driving cars are pervasive, a huge percentage of the American population right now makes its living, and oftentimes a pretty good living, driving. And so, understandably, people are going to be concerned about what does this mean. The—we've heard of the controversies around Uber versus those who have taxi medallions, but it's actually driverless Uber that is going to be even more challenging.

The same is true in the health care field. One of the things that you discover is this Rube Goldberg contraption that grew up over the last 50 years or 60 years, in terms of our health care system, is there's all kinds of economics that are embedded in every aspect of it. So it's not surprising, then, that when we passed the Affordable Care Act, that there are going to be people who push back not just because they really want to make it work and they've got some legitimate, factual critiques of it, but because people's pocketbooks may be threatened.

You—and, Zoë, you just used one example, which was the enormous controversy we had when we said that we should phase out certain types of insurance that, on their face, look really cheap, until you have a tumor and it turns out that they don't cover you. And that very low-cost insurance, sort of the equivalent of the bare-bones insurance you have to get for driving, but when you get in an accident, it turns out, doesn't do anything to fix your car, but obviously, much more is at stake here.

We still have debates today where people will say, you know, people's—aren't having the choices that they used to have. Well, the choices, in some cases, that they used to have were choices to get insurance that weren't going to cover them during a catastrophe.

So I think that the way I would like to see us operate—and we're not there at the moment, and it will never be perfect—is, yes, significant debate, contentious debate, but where we are still operating on the same basic platform, basic rules about how do we determine what's true and what's not. And one of the ironies, I think, of the Internet has been the degree to which it's bringing us unprecedented knowledge, but everything on the Internet looks like it might be true. [*Laughter*] And so, in this political season, we've seen just—you just say stuff. [*Laughter*] And so everything suddenly

becomes contested. That I do not think is good for our democracy, and it's certainly not good for science or progress or government or fixing systems. We've got to be able to agree on certain baseline facts.

If you want to argue with me about how to deal with climate change, that's a legitimate argument. Some people might argue it's unrealistic to think that we're going to be able to fix this so we should just start adapting to the oceans being 6 feet higher. You might want to suggest to me that it's got to be a market-based solution and it's all going to come through innovation, regulation is not going to help, we need a huge—I'm happy to have those arguments. But what you can't do is argue with me that we've had over the last 10, 15 years, each year is the hottest year ever, or that the glaciers are melting and Greenland is melting. You can't argue with me about that because I can see it, and we're recording it.

And in the same way around health, I think any good scientist or doctor would not presume to suggest that the sum total of our knowledge is all contained in our current medical schools, and there may be holistic medicines or alternative medicines that are remarkable, but we also should be able to test them. And you can't just assert that this works and more conventional therapies don't work and not be subject to that kind of testing regimen.

So that's where I think we have to move our conversation generally if we're going to have the kind of debate that Kaf talked about.

Accuracy of Online Information/News Media/Scientific Research

Dr. Gawande. So how do we move our conversation in that way, right? There was a time when scientists were arguing about climate change and reasonably so.

The President. Right.

Dr. Gawande. So how do we set up frameworks where we say, this is our time period where we're going to collect facts, and at the end of the day, we will accept the consensus of fact? Right? How do we do that in our current political enterprise?

The President. If I had the perfect answer to that, then I'd run for President. [*Laughter*] No, I just—look, this takes us a little bit far afield, but I do think that it's relevant to the scientific community, it's relevant to our democracy, citizenship. We're going to have to rebuild, within this Wild Wild West of information flow, some sort of curating function that people agree to.

I use the analogy in politics: It used to be, there were three television stations and Walter Cronkite is on there and not everybody agreed. And there were always outliers who thought that it was all propaganda and we didn't really land on the Moon and Elvis is still alive and so forth. [*Laughter*] But generally, that was in the papers that you bought at the supermarket right as you were checking out. And generally, people trusted a basic body of information.

It wasn't always as democratic as it should have been. And Zoë is exactly right that, for example, on something like climate change, we've actually been doing some interesting initiatives where we're essentially deputizing citizens with hand-held technologies to start recording information that then gets pooled. They're becoming scientists without getting the Ph.D. And we can do that in a lot of other fields as well.

But there has to be, I think, some sort of way in which we can sort through information that passes some basic truthiness tests—[*laughter*]—and those that we have to discard because they just don't have any basis in anything that's actually happening in the world.

And that's hard to do, but I think it's going to be necessary, it's going to be possible. I think the answer is obviously not censorship, but it's creating places where people can say, this is reliable and I'm still able to argue about—safely, about facts and what we should do about it while still not just making stuff up.

Technological Innovation/Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Education/Distinction Between Government and Private Sector

Dr. Gawande. I think you're focusing on the idea of places where the scientific orientation can be that ethos is protected is really impor-

tant. Science is always probable knowledge. It's never nailed down. But we're at CMU, we're at University of Pittsburgh, because they are places that hold those values of a scientific orientation. There are places that live like that online, in patient communities. There are places that are professional societies that make it happen.

It's crucial that it also happen in government and it also happen in the private sector. And I guess my final question would be, for any and all of us, what's the most important thing we can make sure that we do to keep that scientific orientation, that optimism, and that striving for the big opportunity going? That we can keep these values as part of the places where we are, whether they're in the virtual world or in our institutions. And maybe, I'll let you have the last word, so I'll start on that end, if that's okay, Zoë.

Ms. Keating. Well, I really feel like this—it's just this huge opportunity and this way for, if people feel like they can contribute, that then they will trust things. They will trust institutions, they will trust governments, if they feel that they have a voice. And it's our job to figure out how can we make this thing the President was talking about—how can we make the system that allows people to contribute, but it's somehow vetted so that all that knowledge can be shared, because we need all hands on deck. So—[*laughter*].

Dr. Gawande. And a chance for people to participate in the science itself.

Ms. Keating. Yes, a chance for people to participate. And that goes—that's beyond health care, that's across the board. And I feel like that's a huge challenge for our time. Right now, just how can we do that so that we can really—because we need everybody's help in everything that's coming for us.

Dr. Gawande. Riccardo.

Mr. Sabatini. Yes, the one thing that—the fight is a little bit unfair because magic has always answers, the bogus things that you find around. There's always strong answers. There is the cure of cancer, but it's closed in a closet somewhere. While science cannot state those strong answers, because it's a constantly evolving field, and it wouldn't be fair.

But we have a cool story that sometimes we don't say enough. When we describe how the brain works, when we describe the majesty of what it means watching inside your genes and how the proteins flow, and the molecules, and when I explain these stories and I make them human, and I explain cases—stories of patients and people that access their health and they really got incredible advancements on that. When we nail the story right, then we engage the young people, the vast majority of the population.

We tend to fight these bogus messages. But on one side, it means we are failing. We are failing to tell the amazing advancements that we are doing in the right stories, beating fake stories with great realities. And this is a challenge that we have to do. And I'm engaging as much as possible, explaining the excitement that there is in the time in history when we have access to things that we were never even dreaming 15 years ago.

This is the story that we have to tell outside these doors. You are some of the smartest people in this country. You have to be advocates of how amazing things we're doing, without giving strong solutions, but—and fake results, but telling that there are the best people chasing this dream and we're going to crack it. It is our duty, making people feel confident that this is the right story to follow.

Dr. Dzirasa. Yes, I'm honored that you chose to sit on this panel, because I think health is the real truth teller and the real equalizer. When you think about this country, by 2050, we'll be spending about a trillion dollars a year on Alzheimer's. If, Lord willing, we get over 85, half of us will have Alzheimer's. One out of every 48 boys in this country are born with autism now. And so it's the real truth teller. Right? It is the real common enemy that all of us, as Americans, as scientists, as educators have. Right?

And the reason I'm optimistic is because I fundamentally believe there is a 7-year-old sitting in a classroom somewhere that will take all of these investments and all of this work that

we've made and transform things for my family. Right? The challenge for me is that I would love to see an America in which, whether that 7-year-old kid is sitting in a school in Detroit or Baltimore or Gentry High School in the Mississippi Delta, that they will also have the opportunity for their ideas to bubble up and be nurtured. Because, at the end of the day, that—the solution to that common enemy that we all face might be sitting in that classroom right now.

The President. That's great. Well, I'm going to steal some ideas from what my other panelists have already said.

First of all, Zoë's point about opening up systems so that people understand them and don't just feel like cogs in that system, but rather, have agency in that system, I think, is critically important.

So what we've been trying to do across the board—and we're not even close to being there yet—is to use technology as a way to do exactly what you are talking about. Whether it's releasing big data—and the easiest example, I think, for the general public to think about is all the apps that now give us the weather over our phones, and those are all generated from inside government, but it—what used to be closed data now we let out there. Well, it turns out that we've got huge data sets on all kinds of stuff. And the more we're opening that up and allowing businesses, individuals, to work with that information, I think, the more they feel empowered. And that makes a huge difference.

The second thing that I want to emphasize is, the most important curator to be able to sort through what's true and false and sustain that—those scientific values you talk about is the human brain, and making sure that our kids are getting that ability to analyze and do that sorting early. And so part of the reason why we've been emphasizing STEM education is not because we don't value the humanities—and I was a political science and English major, and I've probably learned more from reading novels than textbooks—but it's—what it does do is, it helps everyone as citizens, even if you don't become a doctor or a scientist or a physicist, it helps you evaluate information in a way that allows you to make good decisions in your own life, but also allows you to participate in the country as a whole.

And so we want everybody—we're putting a special emphasis on girls, young people of color, who so often are underrepresented in the STEM fields—we want to make sure they feel a confidence about so much of the technology and information revolution and science that is transforming their lives all around them. And we want them to be creators of science, not just consumers of it. So I think that's very important.

The final thing I'll say is that government will never run the way Silicon Valley runs because, by definition, democracy is messy. This is a big, diverse country with a lot of interests and a lot of disparate points of view. And part of government's job, by the way, is dealing with problems that nobody else wants to deal with.

So, sometimes, I talk to CEOs, they come in and they start kind of telling me about leadership, and here's how we do things. [*Laughter*] And I say, well, if all I was doing was making a widget—[*laughter*]—or producing an app, and I didn't have to worry about whether poor people could afford the widget, or I didn't have to worry about whether the app had some unintended consequences—setting aside my Syria and Yemen portfolio—[*laughter*]—then I think those suggestions are terrific. [*Laughter*] But if—which isn't the—that's not, by the way, to say that there aren't huge efficiencies and improvements that have to be made.

But the reason I say this is, sometimes you get, I think—in the scientific community, the tech community, the entrepreneurial community—the sense of we just have to blow up the system or create this parallel society and culture because Government is inherently wrecked. No, it's not inherently wrecked; it's just Government has to care for, for example, veterans who come home. That's not on your balance sheet, that's on our collective balance sheet, because we have a sacred duty to take care of those veterans. And that's hard, and it's messy, and we're building off legacy systems that we can't just blow up.

We've been pushing very hard in the area of medicine to have the FDA reimagine how it does regulations in the genetic space so that it's different from how they might deal with a mechanical prosthetic. But I don't want to just blow up the FDA, because part of Government's job is to make sure that snake oil and stuff that could hurt you isn't out on—out there on the market being advertised on a daily basis.

So there are going to be some inherent balances that have to be taken in, and there are equities that are complicated in Government. And I guess the reason I'm saying this is, I don't want this audience of people who are accustomed to things happening faster and smoother in their narrow fields to somehow get discouraged and say, I'm just not going to deal with Government. Because, at the end of the day, if you're not willing to do what Kaf said earlier, which is just get in the arena and wrestle with this stuff and argue with people who may not agree with you and tolerate sometimes not perfect outcomes, but better outcomes, then the space to continue scientific progress isn't going to be there.

And what gives me confidence is that I've met a lot of people as President of the United States, and the American people fundamentally are good, they're decent, and they're smart, and they just don't have time to follow everything. The more we empower them, the more we bring them in and include them, I have no doubt that we're going to be able to make enormous strides. And the audience here, I think, is representative of the amazing possibilities that we confront. All right?

Dr. Gawande. Well, let's thank the panel. And I'd also like to thank the President for having the Frontiers Conference. I think you have set an expectation which can apply to any President in the future of any party that you can be a President for science and health and that we can live up to those values. So thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 2:05 p.m. in the Wiegand Gym at the Jared L. Cohon University Center. In his remarks, he referred to Patrick Gallagher, chancellor, University of Pittsburgh. Mr. Sabatini referred to J. Craig Venter, founder, chairman, and chief executive officer, J. Craig Venter Institute. Ms. Keating referred to Steven Keating, research affiliate, Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Mediated Matter Group.

Remarks at the White House Frontiers Conference at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh
October 13, 2016

The President. Thank you, everybody. Please have a seat. Thank you. Well, thank you, Alexis, for that introduction. I love that story that she bumped into me on the elevator. What she didn't mention, by the way, is that she started on her pre-med degree when she was 16, bumping into me in the elevator. She was already well on her way. So, to the rest of you, good luck. [*Laughter*] Hope you already have tenure, because Alexis is coming. [*Laughter*]

I'm only going to speak briefly today because we have an amazing panel and I want to learn from the people who are in attendance here today. But I want to start by recognizing Mayor Peduto of Pittsburgh, who has been an extraordinary innovator and city leader. And give—[*applause*]—yes. Congressman Doyle, who fully supports our innovation agenda, and we need strong allies in Congress, so give Mike Doyle a big round of applause, please.

We also have people from across our agencies: Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx, NIH Director Francis Collins, National Science Foundation Director France Cordova. And I want to thank two extraordinary leaders who once served in my administration and did extraordinary work: President Suresh of Carnegie Mellon and Chancellor Gallagher of Pitt. Part of, sort of, the Obama alumni mafia here. [*Laughter*] As well as all the faculty and

students and staff here at CMU and Pitt for allowing us to turn your campuses into a science fiction movie for the day. [*Laughter*]

Earlier today I got a chance to see some pretty cool stuff. A space capsule designed by the private sector to carry humans out of our atmosphere. Small, unmanned quadcopters that can search disaster areas and survey hard-to-reach places on bridges that might need repairs. I also successfully docked a capsule on the International Space Station. It was a simulation, but I—trust me, I stuck the landing. [*Laughter*]

But here's the thing about Pittsburgh: This kind of stuff is really nothing new. Most folks have probably heard about how this city is testing out a fleet of self-driving cars. But Pittsburgh has been revitalizing itself through technology for a very long time. There is a reason that U.S. Steel Tower is now also the corporate home of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, because the Steel City is now home to groundbreaking medical research and world-class universities. It's the birthplace of some of the most advanced artificial intelligence and robotics systems the world has ever seen. And you are investing in your young people with afterschool STEM programs and maker faires, and "Girls of Steel" robotics teams. And that's how this city came back after an iconic industry fell on tougher times: doubling down on science, doubling down on tech, doubling down on innovation, all of which can create amazing new jobs and opportunities.

And stories like that are not just happening here in Pittsburgh or in Silicon Valley. They're happening in Chattanooga and in Charleston and in Cincinnati, cities where we're seeing science and technology spur new jobs and new industries, new discoveries that are improving our lives and, in many cases, saving lives.

And that's consistent with this Nation, who we are: a nation born from an idea that became the world's laboratory. There aren't a lot of countries where one of your Founding Fathers has an idea to fly a kite in a thunderstorm and helps to fundamentally change how we think about electricity. A place where the women who solved the equations to take us into space, even though they weren't always acknowledged. A nation whose engineers brought us the Internet. Innovation is in our DNA. Science has always been central to our progress, and it's playing a leading role in overcoming so many of our greatest challenges.

That's as true today as it's ever been. Only with science can we make a shift to cleaner sources of energy and take steps to save the only planet we have. Only with science do we have the chance to cure cancer or Parkinson's or other diseases that steal our loved ones from us way too soon. Only through science will we have the capacity to reengineer our cities as populations grow, to be smarter and more productive, to lead humanity farther out into the final frontiers of space—not just to visit, but to stay—and ensure that America keeps its competitive advantage as the world's most innovative economy.

And some of—I was doing some pictures before I came out here with some folks, and they said, thank you so much for what you've done for science. And I confessed, I am a science geek. I'm a nerd. [*Laughter*] And I don't make any apologies for it. [*Applause*] I don't make any apologies for it. It's cool stuff. [*Laughter*] And it is that thing that sets us apart: that ability to imagine and hypothesize and then test and figure stuff out and tinker and make things and make them better and then break them down and rework them.

And that's why I get so riled up when I hear people willfully ignore facts—[*laughter*]—or stick their heads in the sands about basic scientific consensus. It's not just that that position leads to bad policy, it's also that it undermines the very thing that has always made America the engine for innovation around the world. It's not just that they're saying climate change is a hoax or taking a snowball on the Senate floor to prove that the planet's not getting warmer. [*Laughter*] It's that they're doing everything they can to gut funding for research and development, failing to make the kinds of investments that brought us breakthroughs like GPS and MRIs and put Siri on our smartphones, and stonewalling even military plans that don't adhere to ideology.

That's not who we are. We don't listen to science just when it fits our ideologies or when it produces the results that we want. That's the path to ruin. Sixty years ago, when the Russians beat us into space, we didn't deny that Sputnik was up there. [*Laughter*] That wouldn't have worked. No. We acknowledged the facts, and then we built a space program almost overnight and then beat them to the Moon. And then we kept on going, becoming the first country to take an up-close look at every planet in the solar system. That's who we are. That's where facts will get you. [*Laughter*] That's where science will get you.

And that's why, in my first Inaugural Address, I vowed to return science to its rightful place. And by the way, I want to make clear: This idea that facts and reason and science are somehow inimical to faith and feelings and human values and passions, I reject that. For us to use our brains doesn't mean that we lose our heart. It means that we can harness what's in our heart to actually get things done.

And that's why in the first few months of my administration, we made the single largest investment in basic research in our history, because innovation is not a luxury that we do away with when we're tightening our belts. It's precisely at those moments, when we've got real challenges, when we double down on new solutions that can lead to new jobs and new industries and a stronger economy.

So, over these last 8 years, we've worked to recruit the best and brightest tech talent into the administration. We've partnered with academia and the private sector. We've empowered citizen scientists to take on some of our biggest challenges. We've reimagined our Federal approach to science through incentive prizes and 21st-century moonshots for cancer and brain research and solar energy. We've turbocharged the clean energy revolution. We've built the architecture to unleash the potential of precision medicine, dropped enough new broadband infrastructure to circle the globe four times, applied data and evidence to social policy to find out what works; scale up when it works, stop funding things that don't, thereby fostering a new era of social innovation.

We've helped once-dark factories start humming again, putting folks to work manufacturing wind turbine blades longer than the wingspan of a 747. And we realized that we can't look to the future if we're also not going to lift up the generation that's going to occupy that future. So we started the White House Science Fair to teach our kids to send a message that the winner of the Super Bowl isn't the only one that deserves a celebration in the East Room. We hooked up more of our classrooms and communities to the high-speed Internet that will help our kids compete. We're pushing to bring computer science to every student. We're on track to prepare 100,000 STEM teachers in a decade.

And as a running thread throughout this, we are working to help all of our children understand that they, too, have a place in science and tech, not just boys in hoodies, but girls on Native American reservations, kids whose parents can't afford personal tutors. We want Jamal and Maria sitting right next to Jimmy and Johnny, because we don't want them overlooked for a job of the future.

America is about Thomas Edison and the Wright Brothers, but we're also the place you can grow up to be a Grace Hopper or George Washington Carver or a Katherine Jones [Johnson]* or an Ida B. Wells. We're the nation that just had six of our scientists and researchers win Nobel Prizes, and every one of them was an immigrant.

So part of science, part of reasons, part of facts is recognizing that to get to where we need to go we need to lift everybody up, because we're going to be a better team if we've got the whole team. We don't want somebody with a brilliant idea not in the room because they're a woman. We don't want some budding genius unavailable to cure cancer or come up with a new energy source because they were languishing in a substandard school as a child.

* White House correction.

So that's what I've been focused on. Alexis has done some things. I've done some things too. [*Laughter*] But look, I only get two terms and what——

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Which is fine—[*laughter*]—because the Presidency is a relay race. We run our leg, then we hand off the baton. And that's why this conference isn't just about where we've been, it's about where we're going. We're looking to tomorrow. We're trying to institutionalize the work that we've been doing over these last 8 years. But we also want to make sure that these partnerships continue to thrive well beyond my administration. The future is yours to create. It's all of ours.

And we've got a tremendous group here from all across America: from the sciences, from industry, from academia. All of you in your own fields are transformative. You're transforming the way we treat diseases and building smarter and more efficient and more inclusive communities. You're unlocking the data that can make our criminal justice system smarter and fairer. You're harnessing the power of artificial intelligence—big data robotics, automation—for the good of all of us. You're breaking new ground on clean energy and giving us our best hope of staving off the worst consequences of climate change. And you're taking us on that final frontier, firing up the boosters for humanity's journey to Mars.

So today I am proud to build on your work. We've announced Federal and private commitments totaling more than $300 million to throw into the pot: investing in smarter cities, expanding our Precision Medicine Initiative, spurring the development in small satellite technology. We're supporting researchers working to better understand our brains—how we think and learn and remember.

And in fact, it's in that area where I'd like to close: brain research. Before I came onstage, about half an hour ago, I had the chance to meet an extraordinary young man named Nathan Copeland. And back in 2004, Nathan was a freshman in college, studying advanced sciences, interested in nanotechnology. And he was in a car accident that left him paralyzed. For years, Nathan could not move his arms, couldn't move his legs, needed help with day-to-day tasks.

But one day, he was contacted by a research team at Pitt, and they asked if he wanted to be involved in an experimental trial supported by DARPA, the same agency that gave us the Internet and night vision goggles and so much more. And since he was a scientist himself, Nathan readily agreed. So they implanted four microelectrode arrays into his brain, each about the size of half a button. And those implants connect neurons in his brain with a robotic arm so that today, he can move that arm the same way you and I do—just by thinking about it. But that's just the beginning. Nathan is also the first person in human history who can feel with his prosthetic fingers.

Think about this. He hasn't been able to use his arms or legs for over a decade, but now he can once again feel the touch of another person. So we shook hands. He had a strong grip, but he had kind of toned it down. [*Laughter*] And then we gave each other a fist bump.

And researchers will tell you there's a long way to go; he still can't feel with his thumb or experience hot and cold, but he can feel pressure with precision. That's what science does. That's what American innovation can do. And imagine the breakthroughs that are around the corner. Imagine what's possible for Nathan if we keep on pushing the boundaries. And that's what this Frontiers Conference is all about: pushing the bounds of what is possible.

And that's why I've been so committed to science and innovation, not just so that we can restore someone's sense of touch, but so we can revitalize communities, revitalize economies, reignite our shared sense of possibility and optimism. Because here in America, with the right investments, with the unbelievable brilliance and ingenuity of young people like Alexis and Nathan, there is nothing we cannot do. So let's keep it going. Let's get to work.

With that, I think it's time to start our panel. Thank you, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:21 p.m. in the Wiegand Gym at the Jared L. Cohon Universi-

ty Center. In his remarks, he referred to Alexis Chidi, postdoctoral student, Medical Scientist Training Program of the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University; Christine Darden, Margery Hannah, and Katherine G. Johnson, mathematicians and former employees, NASA's Langley Research Center in Hampton, VA; and Dunbar, PA, resident Nathan Copeland, a patient at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center in Pittsburgh, PA.

Statement on the Death of King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand
October 13, 2016

On behalf of the people of the United States, I offer my heartfelt condolences to Her Majesty Queen Sirikit, her children and grandchildren, and the people of Thailand on the passing of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. His Majesty the King was a close friend of the United States and a valued partner of many U.S. Presidents. I had the honor of calling on His Majesty the King during my visit to Thailand in 2012 and recall his grace and warmth, as well as his deep affection and compassion for the Thai people.

As the revered leader and only monarch that most Thais have ever known, His Majesty was a tireless champion of his country's development and demonstrated unflagging devotion to improving the standard of living of the Thai people. With a creative spirit and a drive for innovation, he pioneered new technologies that have rightfully received worldwide acclaim. His Majesty leaves a legacy of care for the Thai people that will be cherished by future generations.

The American people and I stand with the people of Thailand as we mourn His Majesty the King's passing, and today we hold the Thai people in our thoughts and prayers.

Statement on the Election of António Manuel de Oliveira Guterres as Secretary-General of the United Nations
October 13, 2016

On behalf of the United States of America, I congratulate António Guterres on his election today as the next Secretary-General of the United Nations. As a founding member and host country of the United Nations and a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, the United States pledges to provide our full support to Mr. Guterres when he assumes leadership of the United Nations on January 1, 2017.

Since its inception, the United Nations has played a central role in resolving armed conflicts, preserving stability, lifting billions out of poverty, delivering lifesaving humanitarian assistance, and promoting the fullest enjoyment of human rights worldwide. With tens of millions displaced, U.N. peacekeepers deployed at record levels, climate change already impacting countries worldwide, and extremists targeting innocent civilians, the international community has never relied more on the United Nations than it does today. We have every confidence that, as a former Prime Minister of Portugal and U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Guterres has the character, vision, and skills needed to lead the United Nations at this critical moment and to reform its organizations and operations to better meet these unprecedented challenges.

As the United States welcomes Mr. Guterres to his new role, I also want to take this opportunity again to pay tribute to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his decade of service to the U.N. Secretary-General Ban has galvanized the international community behind efforts to address climate change, pushed the United Nations to prevent and resolve deadly conflicts, and advocated for universal values and human rights. He has been a valued partner for the United States and we thank him for his leadership.

Statement on the Death of James J. "Jack" Greenberg
October 13, 2016

Thanks to Jack Greenberg's devotion to justice, millions of Americans have known the freedom to learn and work and vote and live in a country that more faithfully lives up to its founding principle of equality under the law. The son of immigrants who had fled anti-Semitism, he believed that civil rights was a cause for all Americans, regardless of race or circumstances of birth. As a leader of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, he followed in the footsteps of his mentor, Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, and pushed our Nation to confront some of our most profound challenges.

Jack served in our Navy at Iwo Jima and Okinawa and then, at just 27 years old, he helped argue the landmark *Brown* v. *Board of Education* case that desegregated our schools. A decade later, he represented Dr. King in Birmingham jail. He learned quickly that change would not come overnight: that it would take many generations, more court cases, and nationwide movements to even begin realizing the dream of civil rights for all Americans. But Jack's calm temperament and intellectual approach to moral arguments perfectly suited him for the fight; he knew, after all, that history was on his side. Michelle and I offer our thoughts and prayers to his wife Deborah, his children, and all those who loved him dearly and have benefited from his strong sense of right and wrong.

NOTE: The statement referred to Deborah Cole Greenberg, wife, and Sarah, Ezra, David, and Suzanne Greenberg and William Cole, children, of Mr. Greenberg.

Remarks at a Fundraiser for Senatorial Candidate Theodore Strickland in Columbus, Ohio
October 13, 2016

The President. Hello, Ohio! Hello, Democrats! O–H!

Audience members. I–O!

The President. O–H!

Audience members. I–O!

The President. O–H!

Audience members. I–O!

The President. Oh, it is good to see you all! Thank you. I'm just warming you up. [*Laughter*] Because I know the Buckeyes have a big showdown at Wisconsin on Saturday night.

Thank you so much, everybody. Please have a seat. I have—I'm going to talk to you for a while, now. [*Laughter*] Tonight we're here to talk about the showdown that's happening right here in Ohio over the next few weeks. And of course, it would not be an Ohio Democratic Party State Dinner without your former Governor and your next United States Senator, Ted Strickland. Love this man. Your current Senator, who is fighting for you every single day, Sherrod Brown. A couple of your outstanding Members of Congress, Joyce Beatty and Tim Ryan.

Now, I know the Ohio Democratic Party has been preparing for this election. You know a strong party depends on great public servants being elected at the local level and the school boards and the city councils and the mayor's office. And your field operation has helped us win important races from Akron to Toledo, from Chillicothe to Warren. And through the spring, even as we Democrats had a hard-fought primary, you kept signing up thousands of volunteers, registering thousands of voters, organizing on campuses all across the State. You were already looking to the fall campaign. So we are going to benefit big time from the infrastructure that you've already got in place.

So I just want to say thank you for giving us the edge that we need. Thanks for organizing. Thanks for mobilizing. Thanks for not getting

tired. Thanks for still being fired up and still being ready to go. Because right now is when the fruits of all that labor are going to start paying off. It is game time. Kickoff was yesterday. Early voting started yesterday. The game does not start on November 8, the game ends on November 8.

So, everybody here, enjoy your dinner. [*Laughter*] Everybody looks cute. [*Laughter*] But tomorrow you've got to put on those walking shoes. You've got to start making those calls and knocking on doors, getting everybody out to vote early. That's how we won in 2008. That's how we're going to win in 2016.

Because, let's face it, let's face it, Ohio is always close. I don't know what it is about you guys. [*Laughter*] Just making me stressed. I've always got to watch the TV—what's going to happen in Ohio? [*Laughter*] I mean, I pretty much parked here in the final days of both of my campaigns. In 2008, I was here in Columbus 2 days before election day. In 2012, I was here the day before election day. And it makes me think about how far we've come together, not just the fact that I had no gray hair in those pictures. [*Laughter*]

Think about the road we've traveled. Together, we fought our way back from the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. Our businesses have now turned job losses into 15 million new jobs. We turned around an auto industry that Ohio communities depend on, and our automakers are making the best cars in the world and they are selling more than ever, thanks to outstanding UAW workers who take great pride in what they do.

We slashed our dependence on foreign oil. Folks don't even notice gas prices being cheap anymore. [*Laughter*] We more than doubled our production of renewable energy. We've got incomes rising again, rose faster last year than any time on record, all demographic groups. Poverty fell last year by the largest amount since 1968, since I was 7 years old. The uninsured rate is at an alltime low; 20 million people have health insurance that didn't have it before, including folks right here in the great State Ohio.

We brought more of our brave troops home to their families. We delivered justice to bin Laden. And in today's America, wherever you live, you can marry whoever you love.

We've been busy. [*Laughter*] We brought about change that's made a difference in the lives of people all across this country. There's almost no economic measure by which we are not substantially better off today than we were when I came into office.

That's what the hard work and the determination of the American people can do. That's what strong, principled Democratic leadership can do. That's what a President who has your back and is listening to you and cares about you can do. And that's what great Members of Congress and a Democratic majority in Congress can do. And that's why we've got to elect Hillary Clinton as the next President of the United States. That's why we've got to elect Ted Strickland to be the next great Senator from Ohio.

I will not be on the ballot, but everything we've done is going to be on the ballot.

[*At this point, there was a disruption in the audience.*]

Oh, Lord, what's going on now? Who's hollering? I can't even see you. Well, it's great to see you, but I've got all these folks I've got to talk to. [*Laughter*] Maybe you can get me a note. [*Laughter*] Write me a letter, all right?

[*The disruption continued.*]

Okay, I've got you. Okay, thank you. [*Laughter*] I can't hear you that well. I promise you this will go better if you talk to one of my staff up there. I've got you, okay. All right. Thank you.

Audience member. No more pipeline! [*Inaudible*] No more Dakota Access Pipeline!

The President. Okay, I've heard you. Let me now talk to everybody else. Thank you. I love you. All right. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. I mean, I'm getting old so I can't hear that well—[*laughter*]—I can't see that good. [*Laughter*]

[*The disruption continued.*]

I've got you. [*Laughter*]

Where was I? [*Laughter*] All right. So look, I'm not going to be on the ballot, but all the progress that we've made, all that stuff goes out the window if we don't work as hard as we can to win this election. And I've seen what hard work looks like here in Ohio. I've seen it. I've benefited from it. I got elected by it. And now Hillary and Ted and everybody—every Democrat up and down the ballot has got to do the same.

Yes, I know that folks say this every 4 years, but this time it's really true—[*laughter*]—I cannot think of a more important election in our lifetimes. Because the choice between candidates has never been this stark.

I mean, it's a choice between somebody who is as qualified as has ever been to run for this office, somebody who's, over and over, proven that they've—know how to lead and know how to work and understand the issues that working families are facing. That's on the one hand. And then, on the other hand, you've got a—somebody who, each and every day, every time he talks, proves himself unfit and unqualified for this office.

And I don't need to spend a huge amount of time selling this crowd on Hillary. If you want to hear the best case for Hillary Clinton, if you want to hear the very real stakes in this election, I would advise you to link up to Michelle's speech from earlier today in New Hampshire. She was pretty good. [*Laughter*] I mean, she—that's why you get married, to improve your gene pool. [*Laughter*] So your kids end up being superior to you.

So I don't need to sell you on Hillary. And I don't need to sell you on Ted. You guys know her, know him, have seen the track record that they have put together. But I'm going to go ahead and say some nice things about Ted anyway because he's here. [*Laughter*]

You know, I could not be prouder to call Ted a friend. He was a great Congressman for the people of Southeast Ohio. He was a great Governor for everybody in Ohio. He was a great campaign cochair for me in 2012. And there's a reason that Ted has always put working families first, because in those families, he sees his own families. He knows what it's like to struggle. He knows their hopes and their dreams.

He's the son of a steelworker. He's the first in his family to go to college. He's a minister who doesn't just talk the talk, but lives out his faith, and a public servant who puts his values into action.

So, when he was in Congress, he fought to pass the Children's Health Insurance Program—working alongside Hillary—something that still helps millions of children today. As Governor, he froze public college tuition; made it free for Ohio veterans, which helped more young people succeed. And even though he took office as your Governor about a year before the recession hit, by the time he left, Ohio was the fifth fastest growing economy in America.

Ted delivered, and when it mattered most, he had your back. So, on issue after issue, Ohio voters have a clear choice in this election: between somebody who sides with Ohio's working families, and somebody who sides with the special interests who want to block all of our progress.

So, if you care about workers' rights, then the choice is pretty clear. Ted believes we should protect overtime pay so folks get paid what they've earned; that workers should have the right to bargain for better pay and better benefits. His opponent helped strip overtime from 6 million workers, backed a bill that would make it harder for workers to organize.

If you care about higher wages, the choice should be pretty simple. Ted believes that, in 2016, women should get equal pay for equal work. His opponent has voted against equal pay five times. When it comes to the minimum wage, in 2015 I told Members of Congress if they truly believed they could work full time and support a family on less than $15,000 a year, they should try it. And if not, they should vote to give America a raise.

Ted actually tried it for a full week. He actually did it, walked in a minimum wage worker's shoes. Understood how hard it was. Under-

stood the reality of a single mom who's working full time and, at the end of the day, still doesn't have enough to keep a roof over her child's head or make sure that they get a good meal. That's why Ted keeps fighting to raise the minimum wage. And his opponent has voted against it again and again and again. So that's the choice in this election.

If you care about keeping our cops and our kids safe, you've got a choice. Ted Strickland supports commonsense gun safety measures like background checks, keeping assault weapons out of the hands of terrorists. Shouldn't be controversial. His opponent blocked background checks and opposed a bill to stop people on the terror watch list from buying a gun. That's why, as of last month, the NRA has spent more money against Ted Strickland than on all the other House and Senate races combined. Think about that.

If you care about our justice system and our most fundamental rights, then you've got a choice. Ted thinks we should have a full Supreme Court. That's—that didn't used to be a controversial position. Apparently, it is now. His opponent has helped to deny a simple yes-or-no vote to somebody who almost everybody agrees may be the most highly qualified nominee in history. Why? Does he think President Trump should fill the seat with somebody instead?

Audience member. No!

The President. Does he have confidence that that would go well? [*Laughter*] Which brings me to another fairly substantial difference. Unlike his opponent, Ted Strickland has never supported Donald Trump. Hasn't done it.

Now, I understand that Ted's opponent has finally withdrawn his support from Donald Trump—after looking at the polling, now that it's politically expedient. But he supported him up until last week. So I guess it was okay when Trump was attacking minorities and suggesting that Mexicans were rapists and Muslims were unpatriotic and insulting Gold Star moms and making fun of disabled Americans. I guess that didn't quite tip it over the edge. [*Laughter*] Why was that okay?

And now he says he'll vote for the Vice Presidential nominee instead, except that guy still supports Donald Trump. [*Laughter*] Does anybody really think that Ted's opponent is going to be a check on a Trump Presidency? Are we really going to risk giving Donald Trump the congressional majority he'd need to roll back all the progress that we've made over the past 8 years?

Audience members. No!

The President. Look, we know that most Republicans don't think the way Donald Trump does. Even in a banquet like this, full of hardcore Democrats. We have Republican friends, we've got Republican neighbors, we—at the Little League game, soccer game, parent-teacher's conference, we meet them. Some great people. We don't even think that most Republican politicians actually really believe that Donald Trump is qualified to be President. [*Laughter*] I know because they—I talk to them. [*Laughter*] They're all, like, man, this is really bad. [*Laughter*] We're just trying to get through this. [*Laughter*]

But so the problem is not that all Republicans think the way this guy does. The problem is, is that they've been riding this tiger for a long time. They've been feeding their base all kinds of crazy for years, primarily for political expedience. So, if Trump was running around saying I wasn't born here, they were okay with that as long as it helped them with votes. If some of these folks on talk radio started talking about how I was the antichrist, well, you know, it's just politics. [*Laughter*] You think I'm joking. [*Laughter*]

If somebody completely denies climate change or is filled up with all kinds of conspiracy theories about how me and Hillary started ISIL. [*Laughter*] Or that we were plotting to declare martial law and take away everybody's guns. And we did a military exercise—Pentagon does these periodically—in Texas, and suddenly, all the folks in Texas were all, like, they're going to take over right now! [*Laughter*] I'm serious. And then the Senator down there said, yes, we better look into that. [*Laughter*] And the Governor says, well, I don't know. What do you mean you don't

know? [*Laughter*] What does that mean? Are—really? You think that, like, the entire Pentagon said, oh, really, you want to declare martial law and take over Texas? Let's do it under the guise of routine training missions—[*laughter*]—and everybody is going to be—but they took it seriously.

This is in the swamp of crazy—[*laughter*]—that has been fed over and over and over and over again. And look, I—and it's—there's sort of a spectrum, right? It's a whole kind of ecosystem. So—and look, if I watched Fox News I wouldn't vote for me. [*Laughter*] I understand. If I was listening to Rush Limbaugh, I'd say, man, this is terrible. [*Laughter*] Fortunately, I have a more diverse sources of information.

But—and I want to make a serious point here, because I'm not really—I'm really not exaggerating. Everything I'm saying are actual things that have been said and that people—a fairly sizable number of people in the Republican primaries believe. And the people who knew better didn't say anything. They didn't say, well, you know what, I disagree with his economic policies, but that's too—that goes too far. They didn't say, well, I'm not sure his foreign policy is the right one for America, but we can't allow our politics to descend into the gutter.

People like Ted's opponent, they stood by while this happened. And Donald Trump, as he's prone to do, he didn't build the building himself, but he just slapped his name on it and took credit for it.

And that's what's happened in their party. All that bile, all the exaggeration, all the stuff that was not grounded in fact just kind of bubbled up, started surfacing. They know better, a lot of these folks who ran, and they didn't say anything. And so they don't get credit for, at the very last minute, when finally the guy that they nominated and they endorsed and they supported is caught on tape saying things that no decent person would even think, much less say, much less brag about, much less laugh about or joke about, much less act on. You can't wait until that finally happens and then say, "Oh, that's too much, that's enough," and think that somehow you are showing any kind of leadership and deserve to be elected to the United States Senate.

You don't get points for that. In fact, I'm more forgiving of the people who actually believe it—[*laughter*]—than the people who know better and stood silently by out of political expediency, because it was politically convenient.

And if your only organizing principle has been to block progress and block what we've tried to do to help the American people every step of the way, so you're not even consistent anymore—you claim the mantle of the party of family values, and this is the guy you nominate? And stand by and endorse and campaign with until, finally, at the 11th hour, you withdraw your nomination? You don't get credit for that.

You're the party that is tough on foreign policy and opposes Russia, and then you nominate this guy, whose role model is Vladimir Putin, the former head of the KGB? [*Laughter*] I'm sorry, what happened? [*Laughter*] It's disappointing. It really is. Because, yes, I'm a Democrat, but I'm an American first. And I actually believe in a strong two-party system. And I think that the marketplace of ideas should have a reasonable, commonsense Republican Party debating a reasonable, commonsense Democratic Party. But that is not what we have right now.

And the reason is, is because people like Ted's opponents, who know better, have stood silently by. They've been trying to block everything we've tried to do to help working folks for years now. Even here in the State of Ohio, they opposed us trying to save the auto industry on—upon which hundreds of thousands of jobs depend. And then, when it works out pretty good, you're taking credit for it. Man, look at this economy, it's gone great. [*Laughter*] Yes. [*Laughter*] But you sure didn't help. [*Laughter*] It wasn't because of your policies. That's not why Ohio grew. That's not why folks got back to work.

If—so the point is, if your only agenda is either negative—negative's a euphemism—crazy—[*laughter*]—based on lies, based on hoax-

es, this is the nominee you get. You make him possible.

Now they're shocked. It's like, remember that movie—in "Casablanca"? Guy walks in, shocked that there's gambling in this establishment. [*Laughter*] Young people may not understand that reference. [*Laughter*] Go back, watch "Casablanca." Great movie. Humphrey Bogart. [*Laughter*]

So Donald Trump may make most Republican politicians look a little bit better by comparison. I mean, it's like the bar has gotten so low. [*Laughter*] But these are the same Republicans who tried to block us from rescuing the economy, did not offer a single vote when it came to the recovery package that made sure that we started growing again, long before any other advanced economy did. Same folks who didn't vote for the auto industry assistance that resulted now in record-breaking auto sales. The same folks who tried to take away folks' health insurance every chance they get; who refuse to allow votes on giving minimum wage workers a raise; refuse to support making sure women earn equal pay for equal work. How hard a concept is that? Why would you want your daughter to get paid 80 cents for doing the same job that somebody else's son is getting paid a buck to do? That doesn't make any sense.

So don't act like this started with Donald Trump. I mean, he did take it to a whole new level. [*Laughter*] I've got to give him credit. But he didn't come out of nowhere.

And that's why we've got to win this election at every level. That's where you come in, Democrats. That's where your work will make a difference. That's where all the volunteer recruitment and the voter registration and the campus organizing comes into play. Because when Democrats have everybody on the field, we can't lose. And the other side knows that. That's why they're always trying to make it harder for folks to vote.

Which, by the way, that's a big difference between our parties. We're the only advanced democracy that has one party's central principle being, let's make it harder to vote. Doesn't happen other places.

We don't think more voices participating in our democracy makes us weaker, just like we don't try to divide people by race or faith or orientation or gender. We believe we're stronger together, not divided. And if we keep speaking to America's hopes over their fears, and if we inspire them rather than divide them; if we have concrete plans to respond to the very real challenges that folks face with the same sense of urgency and compassion and empathy that we feel in our own families and our own communities; if we care about every kid the same way we want this country to care about our kids, then we'll win in November.

I know that at times this has been a deeply dispiriting election year. And as I think back to 2008, or even 2012, and the sense of energy and hope that we felt, and I think about all the incredible work that we've done and the promises that we've delivered on, sometimes, you wonder, how did we get to the point where we have such rancor? And there are a lot of theories about it. People have real struggles in pockets of this country. Change is happening fast, sometimes faster than we feel like we can absorb. There's a constant stream of information coming at us, and so much of what attracts attention is the bad news instead of all the incredible things that are taking place in every corner of this great land.

But some of it, I think, really does just have to do with the fact that what's best in us has all too often stood on the sidelines and hasn't been heard and has left the field to some of our worst impulses.

So I want all of you to understand that when I reflect back on these 8 years, and I think about all the places I've been—all 50 States, towns and hamlets and big cities, suburbs and metropolises—and met people from all walks of life, on the factory floor, in classrooms, there's so much goodness in this country. There's so much decency in this country.

There's so much hard work going on in this country. There's so much ingenuity going on in this country. There's so much optimism in people's day-to-day lives and so much resilience. And we've just got to give expression to that.

We have to reflect our best selves. And that means even during political campaigns. We've got to show our kids the values that we want to pass on to them.

And you know what, the Democratic Party is not perfect. I can say that even in a Democratic Party dinner. [*Laughter*] We have our own blind spots, and we have our own disagreements. We have interest groups that oftentimes are understandably thinking about their narrow slice of the issue. And sometimes, we contribute to, sort of, the lack of civility in our politics. And we don't always check ourselves. There are times where we're not consistent in what we expect from our own leadership versus others, that—times where we ignore inconvenient truths ourselves.

But what I'm really proud about, what I continue to fundamentally believe is that, at its core, the Democratic Party believes that everybody counts. The Democratic Party believes in ordinary working people being able, if they're working hard, to get ahead. The Democratic Party believes that we've got to leave a country and a planet that's better than the one we inherited for the next generation. The Democratic Party believes that everybody has dignity and everybody has respect and everybody is worthy of consideration. And the Democratic Party believes that we're all in this together.

And that's what we have to show for the next little less than 30 days. That's what we have to fight for. This isn't just about winning elections. It's also about affirming this democracy and affirming the basic idea that people who love their country can change it; that the most important office in this country is the office of citizen; that ordinary people, when they get together, can transform this Nation and can solve any problem and can overcome any obstacle and can heal any division.

If you believe that, if you don't just go through the motions this time, but if you really dig deep and think about what's best in us and what are we fighting for and how do we give expression to that—if you believe that—I guarantee you we will not just elect Ted Strickland as the next Senator from Ohio, we will not just elect Hillary Clinton to be the next President of the United States, but we will secure a brighter future for the greatest nation on Earth.

And I'm going to be right there with you as a citizen of these United States. I'm going to work hard, and I'm going to organize, and I'm going to mobilize, and I'm going to make some phone calls, and I'm going to knock on some doors! And I want you along there with me. Because we've got to keep this thing going. Because the journey is not done yet. Because I'm still fired up and I'm still ready to go!

Thank you, Ohio! God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:59 p.m. in the Battelle Grand ballroom at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Sen. Robert J. Portman; Supreme Court Associate Justice–designate Merrick B. Garland; Republican Vice Presidential nominee Gov. Michael R. Pence of Indiana; Sen. R. Edward "Ted" Cruz and Gov. Gregory W. Abbott of Texas; radio show host Rush H. Limbaugh III; and President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in Cleveland, Ohio
October 14, 2016

The President. Hello, Ohio! Thank you! Thank you so much. Hello, Cleveland! Well, the——

Audience member. I love you, Barack!

The President. I love you back. I do. I do.

The head of the airport here pointed out that in 2012, one of our last rallies was right here. Some of you might have been there. But

I've got to say, it was an amazing rally, and everybody was so enthusiastic, and it was a beautiful——

Audience member. Still are!

The President. Still fired up! But the one thing I've got to say, though, is, since I've been in Cleveland, this time it seems like there's an extra pep in your step. I don't know what happened exactly. I don't know whether I'm—did something happen here in Cleveland? Did LeBron have something to do with it? All right, well, congratulations, everybody.

Can everybody please give Jackie a big round of applause, not just for the introduction, but for her service to our country? We've got some outstanding Members of Congress who are here. Marcia Fudge is in the house. Marcy Kaptur is here. Your outstanding mayor, Frank Jackson, is here. And although he's campaigning elsewhere in the State, I want to make sure we give a shout out to your former Governor and the next United States Senator from Ohio, Ted Strickland. Well——

Audience members. We love you!

The President. I know. I love you back but—thank you, guys. Thank you.

So this will probably be one of the last times that I visit Cleveland as your President.

Audience members. No!

The President. No, no, I'm going to come back to Cleveland, we'll just have—I'll go to a game. But no, understand, Michelle and I, our lease was only 8 years. So now we're making sure we didn't break any china, making sure Bo and Sunny haven't ruined too many carpets. [*Laughter*] We wanted to get our security deposit back. [*Laughter*] But we are so grateful, so blessed, to have had all your support over these years. And it's been a great privilege.

And I remember when we were campaigning here on that closing day. And we were in the midst of two long wars, putting an enormous burden on our military families. We were in the early days of what would turn out to be the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes. You had all kinds of challenges, from health care to climate change, where we weren't even pretending to do something about it. We were just kicking the can down the road.

And I told you then, 8 years ago, that I wasn't a perfect person and I wasn't going to be a perfect President, but what I guaranteed you was that I would work every single day as hard as I could to make sure that working families all across this country got a better deal. And you gave me the honor of serving you, and 8 years later, we have fought our way back from recession. We have helped our auto industry set new records. Our businesses have turned job losses into 15 million new jobs. We've slashed our dependence on foreign oil.

[*At this point, there was a disruption in the audience.*]

Hold on a second, young man. Don't be interrupting everybody. Come on. Come on, sir. Come on. Everybody is going—come on, everybody. Let's do our little chant. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. All right, I think we're okay now. I notice this has been happening everywhere, and I keep on telling folks you've got to organize your own rallies. [*Laughter*] Don't—if you're confident about the other guy, just go to his rallies. I feel confident about my candidate. That's why I'm at this rally. So you don't have to spend time over here. Go knock on some doors for your guy. That's a better way for you to spend your time. [*Laughter*] Unless you're just being paid to be here, in which case, hey, you know, everybody's got to make a living. [*Laughter*]

Where was I? [*Laughter*] So, 8 years ago, we were in tough situations. But because of your resilience, because of your faith in each other, in this country, we have slashed our unemployment rate in half. Incomes are rising again. In fact, incomes went up last year by the largest amount that has ever been measured. Poverty is falling. In fact, last year, poverty went down faster than any time since 1968. Twenty million people have health insurance who didn't have it before. The uninsured rate is now at an alltime low.

We brought more of our brave troops home to their families. We delivered justice to Usama bin Laden. Marriage equality is a reality in

all 50 States. By almost every measure, our economy is better than it was when we came into office. And that's not just true across the country, it's true right here in Ohio.

You just look at the auto industry that was flat on its back when we came into office and now is selling the best cars in the world and is doing as well or better than ever before. And that means there are hundreds of thousands of folks here in Ohio that have benefited.

So we've been busy. But I'm here to tell you——

Audience member. Tell us!

The President. I'm here—you want me to tell you? [*Laughter*] I'm here to tell you that all that progress goes out the window if we don't make the right choice right now. And it shouldn't be a complicated choice, because it's a choice between somebody who is as qualified as anybody who has ever run for this office and somebody who has proven himself unfit to lead or represent this country that we love.

And I've said this before: Democrats and Republicans have always had their differences, and that's a good thing. That's how democracy is supposed to work. And when I was running against John McCain, when I was running against Mitt Romney, we had serious disagreements and debates about economic policy and foreign policy and social policy. And those elections were close. And I thought I had the better argument and I'd be the better President. But I could have seen either one of them serving honorably, not embarrassing us on the world stage. They would have engaged in legitimate debates and normal democratic processes.

But that's not the case with today's Republican nominee. He doesn't have the temperament. He doesn't have the knowledge. He doesn't seem to have the interest in acquiring the knowledge or the basic honesty that a President needs to have. And that was true before we heard him——

Audience member. That's right, sir!

The President. ——talking about how he treats women. And it was——

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo. What do I say?

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Don't boo, vote.

And by the way, that was true when he talked about how Muslims are unpatriotic or when he talked about how Mexicans were rapists or when he made fun of somebody who was disabled. Or he talked about our veterans and our troops and our Gold Star mom.

You know, you don't have to be a husband or a father to know that that kind of language, those kinds of thoughts, those kinds of actions——

Audience member. Unacceptable!

The President. ——are unacceptable. They're not right. You just have to be a decent human being.

And for those of you who didn't have a chance to hear Michelle yesterday talk about what it meant to her, I could not be prouder of her. I said yesterday that this is why I married her, to improve my gene pool to—[*laughter*]—so my daughters would be smarter than me. But she was sticking up. Yes, she was sticking up for women. Yes, she was thinking about the lessons we're teaching the next generation. She was also talking on behalf of men who know we're better than this or who don't want to teach our sons the kind of things that we've been hearing on television; that believe that one of the measures of any society is how does it treat its women, how does it treat its girls? Are you treating them with respect and dignity and equality? And if you believe that we are better than what we've been hearing, the good news is, as she pointed out yesterday, there's something we can do about it. Right here in Ohio, a battleground State. Ohio is always close.

And so you can go vote early right now. Early voting started on Wednesday. And I know everybody here is early voting, because otherwise, you wouldn't be here. If you stood in line to get in this rally, then you've got enough sense to go early vote. But for those of you who are—may not be here, and you don't even know if you're registered, you need to go to iwillvote.com/locate, and you can find the early vote site nearest you. Or you can request a mail-in ballot.

I'm going to repeat that website: iwillvote.com/locate. This is not an infomercial. [*Laughter*] This is an opportunity for you to exercise your——

Audience member. Right to vote!

The President. ——your right to vote, your civic responsibility, the essence of citizenship. And you don't need to wait until election day.

You have a chance to reject a dark and pessimistic vision of a country where we turn against each other, where we turn away from our role in the world. You can reject a politics of fear and resentment and blame and anger and hate. You can choose the America we know ourselves to be, a country full of courage and optimism, a country full of generosity and ingenuity.

We've got real challenges still. When I ran 8 years ago, I said we're not going to solve everything in one Presidency. We've got real challenges. There are folks out there who are still struggling to pay the bills. There are students who are still trying to figure out how to pay off student loan debt. There are parents who are still concerned about caring for a sick child or worried about whether they're going to be able to keep their home. Everybody is worried about political gridlock. All across the country, people are concerned about the possibilities of increased racial division. There are pockets of Ohio and pockets of America, despite the progress we've made, that haven't recovered from factory closures. There are young people who are worried about whether they're going to have the same opportunities that we've had.

But I will tell you this: I've traveled all 50 States. I have talked to hundreds of thousands of people. And what I've seen more than anything else is everything that's good about America, everything that's right about America. I see people working hard. I see people starting businesses. I see teachers teaching kids, taking money out of their own pockets to make sure they've got school supplies. I've seen doctors who are out there serving the indigent and the poor, making sure they've got health care. I have seen our men and women in uniform serving to make sure we are safe. I've seen police officers and law enforcement and first responders who run into danger instead of run away from it.

I've seen young activists who call on us to live up to our highest ideals. I see a young generation that is full of energy and ideas and is not going to be held back by what is right now, but is going to seize what ought to be. And I see, most of all, Americans of every party, background, every faith who believe that we are stronger together—young, old, Black, White, Latino, Asian, Native American, folks with disabilities—all of us pledging allegiance to that same proud flag. That is the America that I know.

And there's only one candidate in this race who's devoted her life to that vision of a better America and that is the next President of the United States, Hillary Clinton.

Now, her opponent has made it pretty clear he's just going to drag this election as low as it can possibly go. And he figures that if he makes our politics just toxic, then maybe you'll just figure out, you've got no good choices and you just get discouraged and you just don't vote.

Audience member. He's wrong!

The President. But don't fall for it.

Audience members. No!

The President. Because I'm telling you right now, Hillary is one of the smartest, toughest, best prepared, most experienced persons ever to run for this job. You know, there's nothing that completely prepares you for what it's like to manage a global crisis or send a young person to war. But Hillary has been in the room when those decisions were made. She's been a First Lady. She has been a Senator. She has been my Secretary of State. And in each and every job she has worked tirelessly and diligently, and she's listened to the American people.

She's done her homework. She has performed. She knows what the decisions that a President makes mean concretely for a soldier or a veteran, for a kid who needs a great education, for a worker who is still looking for a good job or a raise or a decent retirement. Even in the middle of crisis, she keeps her cool, and she pays everybody the proper respect. And most importantly, no matter how tough the

odds, no matter how much people try to knock her down, she doesn't point fingers or whine. She doesn't talk about how everything is rigged. She just works harder and gets the job done and never, ever quits. She doesn't quit, and she doesn't make excuses. And by the way, isn't that what you want from a President?

You know, I notice, her opponent——

Audience member. He's a crybaby! [*Laughter*]

The President. He seems to be in the middle of the game, making excuses all the time for why he might be losing. [*Laughter*] And it's always interesting to me to see folks who talk tough, but then don't act tough. Because if you're tough, you don't make excuses. You don't start complaining about the refs before the game is even done. You just play the game, right?

That's what Hillary Clinton is doing. She's out there playing the game. She's just in the arena for you, fighting every single day to make sure that everybody gets a fair shake. That's what she's doing. There is not a person out there who has been more qualified to serve as our President. That includes me, and that includes Bill. [*Laughter*]

And she's going to be great at it. She's got real plans to address the things she's heard from you: specific ideas to invest in new jobs; specific ideas to help workers share in their company's profits; specific ideas to make sure that fewer jobs move overseas, to make sure that jobs come back in places that have been abandoned, to invest in our people, to put kids in preschool, to put students through college without taking on a ton of debt.

You know, her opponent's maybe getting headlines this week for picking fights with everybody in his own party, threatening to sue the press for stories he doesn't like. Meanwhile, you know what Hillary is doing? She's been talking about what we need to do to fight climate change. She put forward a child tax credit that would help millions of families. She wasn't complaining or whining or fighting, she was just doing the work. And that's what you want from a President: somebody who is going to sit there and do the work for you. Her opponent, he doesn't make very specific plans.

Audience member. No plans! No plans!

The President. If you asked his opponents right now—if you asked his supporters right now, it would be really hard for them to describe what exactly they were going to do. He says he's great at making deals. But as I pointed out, I don't know a lot of people who operate a casino and manage to lose almost a billion dollars in 1 year. [*Laughter*] Usually, the house wins. You know that saying "the house always wins"? [*Laughter*] Unless he owns the house; then, it loses a billion dollars. [*Laughter*]

I don't know a lot of successful businesspeople who just use that failure of losing a billion dollars to then avoid paying Federal income taxes. He says it makes him smart. [*Laughter*] All it does is, it means he's not doing what all of us as citizens should be doing, which is giving back to our troops and our veterans, and our roads and our schools and making sure that America continues to be the greatest nation on Earth. That's part of citizenship. Not trying to weasel out of your responsibilities. That's not smart. And then you want to lead the country? What is that? You're going to teach everybody how to avoid doing their responsibilities? [*Laughter*]

He rooted for a housing crisis because he said it might help his real estate situation. He says, "That's called business." Filed for bankruptcy six times, and then, that allowed him to stiff small businesses and their workers that had already done work for him and that he owed money. When your concern isn't the family that's worried about foreclosure or the small business that is just trying to make ends meet, you'd rather make a buck off their dreams, but not being honest on the other side of your deal, then you can't claim to lead this country. You're not fit to be President of the United States.

And I have to say—because he's getting some support from some working folks. And I want to say to them, look, if a guy spent 70 years on this Earth showing no regard for working people—there's no record that he's supported minimum wage or supported collective bargaining or invested in poor communities—and then suddenly, he's going to be the

champion of working people? Come on. Come on, man. [*Laughter*]

Apparently, in a speech yesterday, he started talking about global elites, that there was a conspiracy of global elites. This is a guy who spent all his time hanging around trying to convince everybody he was a global elite. [*Laughter*] Talking about how great his buildings are and how luxurious. And how rich he is and flying around everywhere. All he had time for was celebrities. And now suddenly, he's acting like he's a populist out there: "Man, I'm going to fight for working people." Come on, man. [*Laughter*]

You want to know what somebody is going to do, look what they've been doing their whole lives. And if you want a leader who actually values hard work and respects working Americans, if you want higher wages and better benefits and a fair Tax Code and equal pay for women and stronger regulations on Wall Street, then you should vote for Hillary Clinton!

If you want to know who is going to keep you safe in a dangerous world, the choice is even clearer. Hillary is going to make sure we finish the job of defeating ISIL, and she won't have to resort to torture or ban entire religions from our country. And she's got the knowledge and the experience and the temperament to be the next Commander in Chief.

You can't have a guy who's insulted POWs and attacks a Gold Star mom and has called our troops and veterans weak and cozies up to dictators and tells our allies we might not stand by their side unless they pay up first. He may be up at 3 a.m. in the morning, but it's because he's tweeting insults to somebody who got under his skin. [*Laughter*] That's not the kind of President you want. Not fit to be Commander in Chief and not fit to lead the world's greatest democracy.

And by the way, this is somebody who threatens to jail his political opponents or silence the media, who welcomes Russian meddling in our electoral process and is now suggesting that if the election doesn't go his way, it's not because all the stuff he said——

Audience member. It's somebody else's fault!

The President. ——but because it's rigged and it's a fraud. Some nations do operate that way. And they're tyrannies. And they're oppressive. They're not the world's greatest democracy. We have fought against those kinds of things. We—around the world, we talk to other countries. We say, no, in a democracy you can't just threaten to jail your opponents. There are things called due process. No, in a democracy, you can't just ban reporters or press that you don't like, because there's this thing called the First Amendment. No, in a democracy, you have a contest, but if you lose, then you say congratulations, and you move on, because the country and our system of government is bigger than any single individual.

That's what we do. The United States of America has always stood for something better. Which by the way—I said this last night; I've just got to go back to this again—it's part of why I'm disturbed about Republican elected officials who know better, but are still supporting this guy. I said that, in part, what's happened here is, over the last 8 years, Republican officials who know better, some of whom I talk to—they're sane people. They're normal folks, but what they've done is, they have allowed a lot of crazy talk to just be pumped out again and again through all kinds of these media outlets. Conspiracy theories—I was born outside this country, and Hillary and I started ISIL—[*laughter*]—and we're going to impose martial law, and we're trying to take everybody's guns away, and crazier stuff than that.

And a lot of Republican elected officials have just stood by. A lot of House Members, a lot of Senators, they stood by, and they didn't say anything because it was a way to rile up their base, and it was a way to mount opposition to whatever we were trying to do. And over time, because a lot of the hardcore Republican partisan voters were just hearing this stuff over and over again, they started to believe it. And that's what allowed Donald Trump suddenly to emerge. Donald Trump didn't build all this crazy conspiracy stuff.

And some Republicans who knew better stood by silently, and even during the course of this campaign, didn't say anything. I mean, I

know that some of them now are walking away. But why did it take you this long? You said you're the party of family values. What, you weren't appalled earlier when he was saying degrading things about women? When he was judging them based on a score of are they a two or a ten? That wasn't enough for you? You're walking away from him now. You—it wasn't disturbing enough for you when he was saying Mexicans who come here are rapists or suggesting that people—patriotic Americans of the Islamic faith—are somehow are suspect and should be treated differently? That wasn't enough?

I'm glad that some of them now say: "Wow, this is really bad. I guess we need to walk away." But if you're doing it just for political expedience, just because you're looking at poll numbers, and you say, "Oh, this might get me in trouble"—that's not enough.

If you say you're about family values, you've got to be about family values all the way through. If you spent all these years extolling Reagan and how tough he was with the Russians, how is it that you suddenly stand silently when you nominate a guy who says his—a guy he admires is the former head of the KGB? If you say that you're about the Constitution and you're opposed to what Obama is doing with executive actions because that shows you're—he's a tyrant, but you're okay with a guy who says to his opponent in the middle of the debate, I'm going to throw you in jail.

Audience members. Crazy!

The President. How does that work? [*Laughter*]

Audience member. It doesn't!

The President. It doesn't work.

And that's why I want everybody to understand what's at stake here. You know, one of the things I've learned these past 8 years is that progress is hard, but you've got to battle it out. And even when you have victories, like the Affordable Care Act, it's not always perfect, and you've got to work to make it better. And you take two steps forward on something like climate change, there are going to be folks who try and push you back. And the special interests are strong, and it is true that the country is so often divided along party lines, and it's very hard to get folks to compromise.

And Hillary understands all that. But what she also knows is that if you stay at it and you work hard, good things can happen. She knows that in a democracy as big and diverse as this, we can't demonize each other. We can't just refuse to compromise. Even when we're right, we've got to work with other folks. She knows that you've got to listen to each other and see ourselves in each other and fight for our principles. She believes that there's common ground out there.

And she believes that we can and should conduct ourselves better; that our leaders are not going to be perfect, but we should aspire to at least express the decency and goodness of the American people, not our worst impulses. We should conduct ourselves with just a basic sense of——

Audience member. Dignity!

The President. ——what this country is about: a certain sense of dignity. And that's not always flashy. That doesn't always grab headlines. That's not always the thing that will get you on the news. That's not always—doesn't fit on a tweet. Politics doesn't always lend itself to that. But if we want our—if we want progress, we've got to work for it. Progress, it doesn't always come right away, and we don't always get a hundred percent what we want. But if we keep at it the way Hillary has kept at it, decade after decade, progress happens.

And if you don't believe that, ask the 20 million more Americans who've got health insurance today that didn't have it before. Ask all those autoworkers right here in Ohio who had been laid off and thought their plant was going to shut down, and now they're working double shifts because we're cranking out so many cars. Ask the proud marine who no longer has to hide the husband that he loves. Ask the young persons who are getting more help now to pay off their student loans. Change is possible. But it doesn't just depend on one person, it depends on all of us.

And so, young people especially out there, I want you to know, you've been through a lot. You've grown up through war and recession

and all kinds of incredible change, but I have seen in you the best in America. I see that you don't try to turn against each other. You're trying to look out for each other. I know you care about being open to the world, not turning away from it. I know that you believe in an inclusive society, an innovative society, and a vibrant society. And you believe in democracy. And I see the same values in you that have always driven this country forward: decency and honesty and hard work and civility. They are not old-fashioned values, they are timeless values. They're what binds this country together.

And so, even though sometimes politics can seem frustrating, even though sometimes our democracy can seem mean spirited, you have a chance right now to reject that kind of politics. You have a chance to reject the politics of fear. You can lift, again, back up the politics of hope. Let's not go backwards; let's go forward.

You've got a chance to elect a woman who's spent her entire life trying to make this country better. Don't fall for the easy cynicism that says your vote doesn't matter. Don't fall for what Trump tries to do and just make everybody depressed. Don't believe it. I promise you, your vote counts. Your vote matters.

There was a time when folks couldn't vote, when you had to guess the number of jellybeans in a jar to vote, the number of soap bubbles on a bar of soap to vote. Folks were beaten to vote. Folks risked everything to vote.

In this election, whatever the issue you care about, it could not be easier for you to vote. If you care about inequality, you need to vote. If you "felt the Bern" in the primaries, you need to vote. You can vote for somebody who only cares about themselves or somebody who is going to fight like heck for working people. Make sure we've got a minimum wage raise. Make sure we've got equal pay for equal work.

You care about criminal justice reform and civil rights, you can vote for somebody who has fought against civil rights for most of their lives, or you can vote for somebody who went undercover to make sure that minority kids were getting an equal shot at a good education and has never stopped fighting since.

You care about the environment and climate change, you can vote for somebody who thinks it's a Chinese hoax, or you can care—you can vote for somebody who thinks that there's something called science and that we should pay attention to it and will fight to protect our planet.

You care about immigration reform and want us to continue to see this Nation as one that is a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants, then you've got to get out there and vote.

Donald Trump's closing argument is, "What do you have to lose?" [*Laughter*] The answer is everything. All the progress we've made right now is on the ballot. Civility is on the ballot. Tolerance is on the ballot. Courtesy is on the ballot. Honesty is on the ballot. Equality is on the ballot. Kindness is on the ballot. All the progress we've made the last 8 years is on the ballot. Democracy itself is on the ballot right now.

So, if you want to send a message, make it loud. Turn back the voices of cynicism. Turn back the voices of ignorance. Send a message of progress. Send a message of hope. Send a message by voting for Hillary Clinton, and show our kids and the rest of the world we remain the greatest country in the world.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you. God bless the United States of America. Hey!

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:09 a.m. on the tarmac at the Cleveland Burke Lakefront Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Khalid Bahhur, commissioner, Cleveland Burke Lakefront Airport; LeBron R. James, forward, National Basketball Association's Cleveland Cavaliers; Jackie Larkins, Navy veteran and owner, Coffee Phix Cafe in South Euclid, OH; 2008 Republican Presidential nominee Sen. John S. McCain III; 2012 Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney; New York Times reporter Serge F. Kovaleski, who suffers from arthrogryposis, a condition which limits the functioning of his joints; Ghazala Khan, mother of Capt. Humayun Khan, USA, who was killed in Iraq in 2004; former President William J. Clinton; President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; and

Sen. Bernard Sanders, in his former capacity as a Democratic Presidential candidate. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Statement on United States-Cuba Normalization
October 14, 2016

Today I approved a Presidential policy directive that takes another major step forward in our efforts to normalize relations with Cuba. This directive takes a comprehensive and whole-of-Government approach to promote engagement with the Cuban Government and people and make our opening to Cuba irreversible.

In December 2014, following more than 50 years of failed policy, I announced that the United States would begin a process of normalizing relations with Cuba. Since then, we've worked with the people and the Government of Cuba to do exactly that: reestablishing diplomatic relations, opening Embassies, expanding travel and commerce, and launching initiatives to help our people cooperate and innovate. This new directive consolidates and builds upon the changes we've already made, promotes transparency by being clear about our policy and intentions, and encourages further engagement between our countries and our people.

Consistent with this approach, the Departments of Treasury and Commerce issued further regulatory changes today, building on the progress made over the last 2 years, to continue to facilitate more interaction between the Cuban and American people, including through travel and commercial opportunities, and more access to information. This follows previous changes that helped facilitate interconnectivity between our peoples and to promote economic reforms on the island by providing access to the dollar in international transactions. These changes are representative of the progress I saw firsthand when I visited Havana to personally extend a hand of friendship to the Cuban people. The quick flight over 90 miles of blue water belied the real barriers of the past that were crossed that day, but my interactions with everyday Cubans told a promising story of neighbors working to build broader ties of cooperation across the Americas.

Challenges remain—and very real differences between our governments persist on issues of democracy and human rights—but I believe that engagement is the best way to address those differences and make progress on behalf of our interests and values. The progress of the last 2 years, bolstered by today's action, should remind the world of what's possible when we look to the future together.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this statement.

Directive on United States-Cuba Normalization
October 14, 2016

Presidential Policy Directive/PPD–43

Memorandum for the Vice President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the United States Trade Representative, the Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, the Assistant to the President and National Security Advisor, the Assistant to the President and Counsel to the

President, the Director of National Intelligence, the Assistant to the President for Science and Technology and Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy and Director of the National Economic Council, the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism, the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Director of the Office of Personnel Management

Subject: United States-Cuba Normalization

I. Introduction

On December 17, 2014, I announced that the United States would chart a new course with Cuba, ending an outdated policy that had failed to advance U.S. interests and support reform and a better life for the Cuban people on the island over several decades. Under the new policy, the United States expands and promotes authorized engagements with Cuba to advance cooperation on areas of mutual interest, and increase travel to, commerce with, and the free flow of information to Cuba. The objective of the new policy is to help the Cuban people to achieve a better future for themselves and to encourage the development of a partner in the region capable of working with the United States to confront regional challenges, such as climate change, disease, and illicit trafficking.

Endogenous changes underway in Cuba offer opportunities to advance U.S. interests and shift away from an embargo, which is an outdated burden on the Cuban people and has impeded U.S. interests. My Administration has repeatedly called on the Congress to lift the embargo. United States policy is designed to create economic opportunities for the Cuban people; promote respect for human rights; further advances on regional security and defense issues, such as health, law enforcement, and migration; and pursue cooperation with the Cuban government that can strengthen our leadership in the hemisphere. We recognize Cuba's sovereignty and self-determination and acknowledge areas of difference. We seek to address such differences through engagement and dialogue, and by encouraging increased understanding between our governments and our peoples.

The large Cuban-American community in the United States has an integral role to play in normalization, and in reconciliation between members of the diaspora who left Cuba and those who remain on the island. Normalization necessarily extends beyond government-to-government rapprochement—it includes rebuilding bridges between individuals and families.

This directive: (1) describes the U.S. vision for normalization with Cuba and how our policy aligns with U.S. national security interests; (2) assesses progress toward normalization; (3) describes the current and foreseen strategic landscape; (4) describes priority objectives for normalization; and (5) directs actions required to implement this PPD.

II. Vision for United States-Cuba Normalization

The vision of the United States for U.S.-Cuba normalization is guided by the following national security interests, as described in the 2015 *National Security Strategy:*

- The security of the United States, its citizens, and U.S. allies and partners.
- A strong, innovative, and growing U.S. economy in an open international economic system that promotes opportunity and prosperity.
- Respect for universal values at home and around the world.
- A rules-based international order that promotes peace, security, and opportunity.

Our vision for U.S.-Cuba normalization reflects my Administration's support for broad-based economic growth, stability, increased people-to-people ties, and respect for human rights and democratic values in the region. In the long-term, the United States seeks the following end-states:

1. *Enhanced security of the United States and U.S. citizens at home and abroad.* We seek to ensure U.S. citizens traveling to Cuba are safe and secure and the United States is protected from: those seeking to exploit increased connectivity for illicit ends, irregular migration, and natural or man-made hazards. Our policy advances bilateral cooperation in areas of mutual interest, including diplomatic, agricultural, public health, and environmental matters, as well as disaster preparedness and response, law enforcement, migration, and other security and defense topics. Our policy also supports increased cooperation with Cuba on regional initiatives on behalf of these interests.

2. *A prosperous, stable Cuba that offers economic opportunities to its people.* Increased travel and economic interconnectedness supports improved livelihoods for the Cuban people, deeper economic engagement between our two countries, as well as the development of a private sector that provides greater economic opportunities for the Cuban people. Efforts by the Cuban authorities to liberalize economic policy would aid these goals and further enable broader engagement with different sectors of the Cuban economy. United States policy helps U.S. businesses gain access to Cuban markets and encourages the sustainable growth of the Cuban economy. The U.S. private sector, scientific and medical researchers, agriculture industry, foundations, and other groups have new avenues for collaboration that can provide opportunities for Cuban entrepreneurs, scientists, farmers, and other professionals. At the same time, increased access to the internet is boosting Cubans' connectivity to the wider world and expanding the ability of the Cuban people, especially youth, to exchange information and ideas. The United States is prepared to support Cuban government policies that promote social equality and independent economic activity.

3. *Increased respect for individual rights in Cuba.* Even as we pursue normalization, we recognize we will continue to have differences with the Cuban government. We will continue to speak out in support of human rights, including the rights to freedoms of expression, religion, association, and peaceful assembly as we do around the world. Our policy is designed to support Cubans' ability to exercise their universal human rights and fundamental freedoms, with the expectation that greater commerce will give a broader segment of the Cuban people the information and resources they need to achieve a prosperous and sustainable future. In pursuit of these objectives, we are not seeking to impose regime change on Cuba; we are, instead, promoting values that we support around the world while respecting that it is up to the Cuban people to make their own choices about their future.

4. *Integration of Cuba into international and regional systems.* We seek Cuban government participation in regional and international fora, including but not limited to, those related to the Organization of American States (OAS) and Summit of the Americas to advance mutually held member objectives. We believe that a Cuba that subscribes to the purposes and standards of such fora will benefit, over time, from bringing its domestic economic and political practices in line with international norms and globally accepted standards. Our policy strengthens the U.S. position in international systems by removing an irritant from our relationships with our allies and partners and gaining support for a rules-based order.

III. Progress Toward United States-Cuba Normalization

Since the United States announced on December 17, 2014, that it would chart a new course with Cuba, we have re-established diplomatic relations and have made progress toward the normalization of our bilateral relationship. We opened our respective embassies, six U.S. cabinet secretaries visited Havana, four Cuban ministers visited the United States, and I became the first sitting U.S. President to visit Cuba since 1928. We established a Bilateral Commission to prioritize areas of engagement, and we concluded non-binding arrangements on environmental protection, marine sanctuaries, public health and biomedical research, agriculture, counternarcotics, trade

and travel security, civil aviation, direct transportation of mail, and hydrography. We launched dialogues or discussions on law enforcement cooperation, regulatory issues, economic issues, claims, and internet and telecommunications policy.

Given Cuba's proximity to the United States, increased engagement by U.S. citizens, companies, and the nongovernmental sector holds extraordinary promise for supporting our national interests. Bearing in mind the limits imposed by the Cuban Liberty and Democratic (LIBERTAD) Solidarity Act of 1996 ("Libertad Act") and other relevant statutes, the Departments of the Treasury and Commerce implemented six packages of regulatory amendments to the Cuba sanctions program, easing restrictions on travel, trade, and financial transactions. United States individuals, firms, and nongovernmental organizations are availing themselves of these regulatory changes to visit Cuba, and authorized travel to Cuba increased by more than 75 percent from 2014 to 2015. Future U.S. citizen travel will be supported by scheduled air service, which began in August 2016, and the first U.S. cruise liner visited Cuban ports in May 2016. We also commenced direct transportation of mail between our two countries, and U.S. telecommunications firms established direct voice and roaming agreements with Cuba. For its part, the Cuban government has continued to pursue incremental economic reforms and launched more than 100 public Wi-Fi hotspots across the island.

These developments lay the foundation for long-term engagement with Cuba that advances U.S. interests. But we have a great deal more to do to build on that foundation based on a realistic assessment of the strategic landscape surrounding normalization.

IV. Strategic Landscape

Cuba is experiencing several transitions in areas such as leadership, the economy, technological development, civil society, and regional and global integration. Cuba's leaders recognize the need to transition to the next generation, but they prioritize gradual, incremental changes to ensure stability.

Cuba has important economic potential rooted in the dynamism of its people, as well as a sustained commitment in areas like education and health care. Yet the Cuban government faces significant economic challenges, including eliminating its dual-exchange-rate system, making its state-run enterprises more efficient and transparent, developing a financial system that provides expanded services to individuals and the private sector, and reducing its reliance on foreign subsidies. Cuba remains highly dependent on food and energy imports, yet must cope with limited sources of hard currency to pay for import needs. Significant emigration of working age Cubans further exacerbates Cuba's demographic problem of a rapidly aging population.

A series of statutes limits U.S. economic engagement with Cuba, precluding a complete lifting of restrictions on U.S. travel to Cuba, prohibiting United States Government export assistance and the provision of U.S. credit for Cuban purchases of agricultural commodities, and requiring that the embargo not be suspended or terminated unless the President determines that a transition or democratically elected government has come to power in Cuba.

Due to Cuba's legal, political, and regulatory constraints, its economy is not generating adequate foreign exchange to purchase U.S. exports that could flow from the easing of the embargo. Even if the U.S. Congress were to lift the embargo, Cubans would not realize their potential without continued economic reform in Cuba. Cuban government regulations and opaque procurement practices hamper transactions with U.S. companies that would be permitted under U.S. law.

Normalization efforts have raised Cubans' expectations for greater economic opportunities. With an estimated 1 in 4 working Cubans engaged in entrepreneurship, a dynamic, independent private sector is emerging. Expansion of the private sector has increased resources for individual Cubans and created nascent openings for Cuban entrepreneurs to engage with U.S. firms and nongovernmental organizations.

We take note of the Cuban government's limited, but meaningful steps to expand legal protections and opportunities for small- and medium-sized businesses, which, if expanded and sustained, will improve the investment climate.

Cuba is not a member of international financial institutions (IFIs), such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank, which could provide expertise and potentially finance economic reforms and viable investment projects.

Although Cuba has reached agreement with several creditor nations on bilateral debt relief through restructuring and forgiveness, it remains in default to the United States Government on pre-Cuban revolution bilateral debts and does not participate in international capital markets. Cuba and the United States are both members of the World Trade Organization (WTO); however, neither country applies the agreement to the other because of the U.S. embargo toward Cuba.

Rapprochement has enabled us to increase our engagement with Cuba on regional issues such as the Colombia peace process and healthcare in Haiti, and has undermined an historic rallying point for regimes critical of the United States. Although Cuba has expressed no interest in participating in the OAS, it did attend the Summit of the Americas in 2015. We also welcome engagement between Cuba and other U.S. allies from around the world, including our European and Asian treaty allies. At the same time, we recognize that Cuba and the United States will continue to have differences on many regional and global issues.

U.S. engagement with the Cuban government will also be constrained by Cuba's continued repression of civil and political liberties. We anticipate the Cuban government will continue to object to U.S. migration policies and operations, democracy programs, Radio and TV Marti, the U.S. presence at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Station, and the embargo. The United States Government has no intention to alter the existing lease treaty and other arrangements related to the Guantanamo Bay Naval Station, which enables the United States to enhance and preserve regional security.

In this strategic environment, the policies and actions the United States pursues to advance our vision for U.S.-Cuba normalization will significantly shape the future of bilateral and regional relations, as well as our shared security and prosperity.

V. Six U.S. Objectives for the Medium-Term U.S.-Cuba Relationship

To advance the four end-state goals associated with our strategic vision for U.S.-Cuba normalization, the United States will move concurrently on the following six priority objectives:

1. *Government-to-Government Interaction*

We will continue high-level and technical engagement in areas of mutual interest, including agriculture, the economy and small businesses, transportation, science and technology, environment, climate, health, law enforcement, migration, national security, disaster preparedness and response, and counterterrorism. Through the Bilateral Commission, we will identify and prioritize areas of collaboration and engagement that advance our end-state goals. Stronger diplomatic ties will enable constructive engagement on bilateral differences, including our democracy and broadcasting programs, while protecting our interests and assets, such as the Guantanamo Bay Naval Station. We will utilize engagement to urge Cuba to make demonstrable progress on human rights and religious freedom. As the United States and Cuban governments build trust through more frequent engagement, we will increasingly conduct working-level interactions between Cuban ministries and U.S. agencies and departments that lessen the need for high-level conversations on routine matters. Given the lack of diplomatic relations over the past several decades, we will seek broad engagement across the Cuban government, including ministries and local officials. When appropriate and legally available, we will engage with Cuba to normalize trade relations fully.

2. *Engagement and Connectivity*

The United States will continue to encourage people-to-people linkages through government and privately sponsored exchanges, including those involving educational, cultural, business, science, environment, technology, and sports. As permitted by law, we will continue to support the development of scheduled and chartered air service and maritime links, including ferries. An ongoing partnership with the Cuban-American community is of particular importance given Cuban-Americans' strong family and socio-cultural ties, as well as their natural role as citizen-ambassadors. We will facilitate opportunities for Cuban-Americans to rebuild and create new bonds with family to support reconciliation. To facilitate Cuba's goal of increasing its internet access from 5 percent to 50 percent of the population by 2020, we will seek the establishment of a bilateral working group to expand internet connectivity. We will seek opportunities that enable U.S. foundations and universities to establish linkages with Cuba.

3. *Expanded Commerce*

The United States Government will seek to expand opportunities for U.S. companies to engage with Cuba. The embargo is outdated and should be lifted. My Administration has repeatedly called upon the Congress to lift the embargo, and we will continue to work toward that goal. While the embargo remains in place, our role will be to pursue policies that enable authorized U.S. private sector engagement with Cuba's emerging private sector and with state-owned enterprises that provide goods and services to the Cuban people. Law enforcement cooperation will ensure that authorized commerce and authorized travelers move rapidly between the United States and Cuba. Although we recognize the priority given to state-owned enterprises in the Cuban model, we seek to encourage reforms that align these entities with international norms, especially transparency.

United States regulatory changes have created space for the Cuban government to introduce comparable changes. In tandem with the Department of the Treasury's regulatory change to expand Cuba's access to the U.S. financial system and U.S. dollar transit accounts, the Cuban government announced in early 2016 plans to eliminate the 10 percent penalty on U.S. dollar conversion transactions, subject to improved access to the international banking system. We will sustain private and public efforts to explain our regulatory changes to U.S. firms and banks, Cuban entrepreneurs, and the Cuban government.

4. *Economic Reform*

While the Cuban government pursues its economic goals based on its national priorities, we will utilize our expanded cooperation to support further economic reforms by the Cuban government. Recent exchanges among financial service institutions and regulators have provided greater mutual understanding of our respective financial system and economic priorities. We will undertake government-to-government dialogues to discuss options for macro- and microeconomic reform, with the goal of connecting the changes in U.S. policy with Cuban reforms in a manner that creates opportunity for U.S. firms and the Cuban people.

If and when the Congress lifts the embargo, my Administration will engage with the Congress and stakeholders on preparatory commercial and economic exchanges and dialogues. My Administration would then similarly engage the Congress on the substance and timing of a new bilateral commercial agreement to address remaining statutory trade requirements.

5. *Respect for Universal Human Rights, Fundamental Freedoms, and Democratic Values*

We will not pursue regime change in Cuba. We will continue to make clear that the United States cannot impose a different model on Cuba because the future of Cuba is up to the Cuban people. We seek greater Cuban government respect for universal human rights and fundamental freedoms for every individual. Progress in this area will have a positive impact on the other objectives. We will encourage the Cuban government to respect human rights; support Cuba's emerging, broad-based civil society; and encourage partners and nongovernmental actors to join us in advocating for

reforms. While remaining committed to supporting democratic activists as we do around the world, we will also engage community leaders, bloggers, activists, and other social issue leaders who can contribute to Cuba's internal dialogue on civic participation. We will continue to pursue engagements with civil society through the U.S. Embassy in Havana and during official United States Government visits to Cuba. We will seek to institutionalize a regular human rights dialogue with the Cuban government to advance progress on human rights. We will pursue democracy programming that is transparent and consistent with programming in other similarly situated societies around the world. We will utilize our increased ability to engage regional partners, both bilaterally and through regional bodies, to encourage respect for human rights in Cuba. We will consult with nongovernmental actors such as the Catholic Church and other religious institutions. Finally, we will work with the European Union and likeminded international organizations and countries to encourage the Cuban government to respect universal values.

6. *Cuban Integration into International and Regional Systems*

We will expand dialogue with Cuba in the organizations in which it already holds membership, such as the WTO and the World Customs Organization (WCO), and we will encourage Cuba to move toward rules-based engagement, subject to statutory requirements. We will encourage Cuba to bring its legal framework, particularly its commercial law, in line with international standards. We will encourage Cuba to meet WCO standards for supply chain security. To the extent permitted by and consistent with applicable law, we will facilitate integration into international bodies, including through the use of technical assistance programs. We will pursue cooperation with Cuba on regional and global issues (e.g., combating the Ebola outbreak and the Colombia peace process). Ending the embargo and satisfying other statutory requirements relating to trade will allow the United States to normalize trade relations with Cuba.

VI. Policy Implementation

1. *Roles and Responsibilities*

To facilitate the effective implementation of this directive, departments and agencies will have the following roles and responsibilities, consistent with the relevant legal authorities and limits:

The National Security Council (NSC) staff will provide ongoing policy coordination and oversight of the implementation of this PPD and the overall Cuba strategy as necessary.

The Department of State will continue to be responsible for formulation of U.S. policy toward and coordination of relations with Cuba. This includes supporting the operations of Embassy Havana and ensuring it has adequate resources and staffing. Other responsibilities include the issuance of nonimmigrant and immigrant visas, refugee processing, promotion of educational and cultural exchanges, coordination of democracy programs, and political and economic reporting. State will continue to lead the U.S.-Cuba Bilateral Commission and coordinate a number of dialogues, such as the Law Enforcement Dialogue, annual migration talks, and meetings to resolve outstanding claims. State will continue to co-lead efforts with the U.S. Agency for International Development to ensure democracy programming is transparent and consistent with programming in other similarly situated societies. State will coordinate efforts to advance science and technology cooperation with Cuba. State will support telecommunications and internet access growth in Cuba and provide foreign policy guidance to the Departments of Commerce and the Treasury on certain exports, financial transactions, and other license applications.

The U.S. Mission to the United Nations (USUN), in coordination with State, will oversee multilateral issues involving Cuba at the United Nations. USUN will identify areas of possible collaboration with Cuba that could help foster a more collaborative relationship between the United States and Cuba at the United Nations. The USUN will also participate in discussions regarding the annual Cuban embargo resolution at the United Nations, as

our bilateral relationship continues to develop in a positive trajectory.

The Department of the Treasury is responsible for implementation of the economic embargo restrictions and licensing policies. The Treasury will continue its outreach to help the public, businesses, and financial institutions understand the regulatory changes. The Treasury will continue to review and respond to public questions and feedback on regulations and public guidance that could be further clarified and to discuss with State any novel license requests that the Treasury receives from the public to determine whether such requests are consistent with the regulatory changes and existing law. The Treasury will make use of available channels for bilateral dialogue to understand Cuba's economic and financial system and encourage reforms and will continue to engage in dialogue with the Cuban government about our regulatory changes.

The Department of Commerce will continue to support the development of the Cuban private sector, entrepreneurship, commercial law development, and intellectual property rights as well as environmental protection and storm prediction. If statutory restrictions are lifted, Commerce will promote increased trade with Cuba by providing export assistance to U.S. companies. In the meantime, Commerce will continue a robust outreach effort to ensure that U.S. companies understand that U.S. regulatory changes provide new opportunities to obtain licenses or use license exceptions to increase authorized exports to Cuba, including to Cuban state-owned enterprises that provide goods and services to meet the needs of the Cuban people. Additionally, Commerce will continue to engage in dialogue with the Cuban government about our regulatory changes, as well as the need for simplification of the Cuban import process, transparency in Cuban business regulations, and other steps that will lead to full realization of the benefits of our regulatory changes.

The Department of Defense (DOD) will continue to take steps to expand the defense relationship with Cuba where it will advance U.S. interests, with an initial focus on humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and counternarcotics in the Caribbean. The DOD will support Cuba's inclusion in the inter-American defense system and regional security and defense conferences, which will give Cuba a stake in hemispheric stability. The DOD will continue to make contingency preparations and support the capacity of the Department of Homeland Security and State to address mass migration and maritime migration issues pursuant to Executive Orders 12807 and 13276 and consistent with other applicable interagency guidance and strategy.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will engage, together with the Department of Justice, with the Cuban government to combat terrorism and transnational organized crime. In support of U.S. security and foreign policy objectives, DHS will develop protocols for investigative cooperation with Cuba in coordination with other departments and agencies. The DHS will strengthen the security and efficiency of cross-border supply chains and travel systems in support of people-to-people engagement and authorized U.S. trade with the Cuban private sector. The DHS will safeguard the integrity of the U.S. immigration system, to include the facilitation of lawful immigration and ensure protection of refugees. The Secretary of Homeland Security, the United States Government lead for a maritime migration or mass migration, with support from the Secretaries of State and Defense, will address a maritime migration or mass migration pursuant to Executive Orders 12807 and 13276 and consistent with applicable interagency guidance and strategy.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) will engage, together with DHS, with the Cuban government to combat terrorism and transnational organized crime. The DOJ will work with Cuba to expand security and law enforcement cooperation, increase information sharing, and share best practices with Cuban counterparts. This work will build upon, and strengthen, current law enforcement cooperation with Cuba under the umbrella of the U.S.-Cuba Law Enforcement Dialogue and its various working groups, which focus on counterterrorism,

counternarcotics, cybercrime, human trafficking, and other areas of criminal activity.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) will continue to engage with the Cuban government, entrepreneurs, small businesses, and cooperative enterprises. The SBA will support exchanges with the Cuban government in areas of mutual interest, particularly on formalization of small businesses and to spur the growth of new enterprises.

The Office of the United States Trade Representative will provide trade policy coordination in international fora and, consistent with statutory requirements and restrictions, prepare for negotiations to normalize and expand U.S.-Cuba trade.

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) will work to increase U.S. food and agricultural exports to Cuba by building market opportunities, improving the competitive position of U.S. agriculture, and building Cuba's food security and agricultural capacity, while protecting plant, animal, and human health. USDA will work with the Government of Cuba to advance cooperation outlined in the U.S.-Cuba agricultural memorandum of understanding signed in March 2016. The USDA will build the U.S.-Cuba trade and development relationship to the extent permitted by and consistent with applicable law.

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), in accordance with the June 2016 memorandum of understanding between HHS and the Ministry of Public Health of the Republic of Cuba, will collaborate with Cuban counterparts in the areas of public health, research, and biomedical sciences, including collaboration to confront the Zika virus, dengue, chikungunya, and other arboviruses. The HHS will promote joint work, such as development of vaccines, treatments, and diagnostics; partner with Cuba to prevent, detect, and respond to infectious disease outbreaks; collaborate in the field of cancer control, treatment programs, and joint research; and exchange best practices related to access to healthcare.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) will coordinate with departments and agencies the United States Government's response to unplanned environmental occurrences, such as natural or manmade disasters. The USAID will co-lead efforts with State to ensure that democracy programming is transparent and consistent with programming in other similarly situated societies.

The Department of Transportation (DOT) will continue to develop air and surface transportation links between the United States and Cuba in support of transportation providers, authorized travelers, and commerce, while providing required regulatory and safety oversight of transportation providers and systems.

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) will support broader United States Government efforts to normalize relations with Cuba, with Intelligence Community elements working to find opportunities for engagement on areas of common interest through which we could exchange information on mutual threats with Cuban counterparts.

The Department of the Interior (DOI) will continue cooperation with Cuba on marine protected areas and continue to engage Cuban counterparts to finalize arrangements on wildlife conservation, terrestrial national protected areas, and seismic records.

2. *Congressional Outreach*

Strong support in the Congress for U.S.-Cuba normalization would contribute to the speed and success of the aforementioned goals, particularly with respect to the embargo and adequate embassy staffing. We will seek to build support in the Congress to lift the embargo and other statutory constraints to enable expanded travel and commerce with Cuba and accelerate normalization. We will regularly engage with Members of Congress and staff on challenges and opportunities in Cuba, advocate for United States Government policies and sufficient staff and resources to implement the aforementioned goals and policy priorities, and encourage and facilitate congressional travel to the region.

3. *Monitoring and Oversight*

The Interagency Policy Committee (IPC), or its future equivalent, will have primary responsibility for coordinating and overseeing the implementation of this policy. The NSC

staff will convene regular IPC and Deputies Committee meetings as necessary to monitor implementation and resolve obstacles to progress. The following departments and agencies will designate senior individuals responsible for managing policy implementation in their agency: State, the Treasury, Commerce, DOD (Office of the Secretary of Defense and Joint Staff), DHS, DOJ, USDA, HHS, DOT, USUN, the Office of the United States Trade Representative, USAID, SBA, and DNI.

4. *Previous Guidance*

Executive Order 13276, *Delegation of Responsibilities Concerning Undocumented Aliens Interdicted or Intercepted in the Caribbean Region*, dated November 15, 2002, and Executive Order 12807, *Interdiction of Illegal Aliens*, dated May 24, 1992, remain in effect.

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this directive.

Statement on Signing the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children Act

October 14, 2016

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 246, the "Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children Act," which will create the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children. The Commission is tasked with the important work of undertaking a comprehensive study of Federal, State, local, and tribal programs that serve Native children, and making recommendations on how those programs could be improved. Over the past 8 years, my Administration has been committed to working closely with tribes to strengthen our nation-to-nation relationships and to forge a brighter future for all our children. During my own visits to Indian Country, I have been inspired by the talent and enthusiasm of young people who want nothing more than to make a positive difference in their communities. From the Indian Child Welfare Act to working to return control of Indian education to tribal nations, I am proud of the progress we have made over the past 8 years. I applaud the Congress, and in particular Senator Heitkamp, for the efforts that made this new law possible.

The bill provides for a Commission consisting of three individuals appointed by the President and eight individuals appointed by congressional leaders, and would place this Commission in a specific office within the Department of Justice. While I welcome the creation of this Commission, it cannot be located in the executive branch consistent with the separation of powers because it includes legislative branch appointees (who here are empowered to direct other executive branch agencies to provide additional resources to the Commission). I am therefore instructing the Attorney General to treat the Commission as an independent entity, separate from the executive branch.

Upon signing the bill my Administration will begin seeking appointments for the Commission from the Congress so we can implement this legislation as soon as possible. I look forward to seeing the Commission's work in the years to come—work that will help ensure all our young people can reach their full potential.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
October 14, 2016.

NOTE: S. 246, approved October 14, was assigned Public Law No. 114–244.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the War Powers Resolution Report for Yemen
October 14, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On October 12, 2016, at my direction, U.S. Armed Forces conducted missile strikes on radar facilities in Houthi-controlled territory in Yemen. Initial assessments show that the radar facilities were destroyed by the strikes.

I directed these strikes in response to antiship cruise missile launches perpetrated by Houthi insurgents that threatened U.S. Navy warships in the international waters of the Red Sea on October 9 and October 12. The targeted radar facilities were involved in the October 9 launches and other recent attacks. These limited and proportionate strikes were conducted to protect our personnel and our ships and will preserve our freedom of navigation in this important maritime passageway. The United States stands ready to take action in self-defense, as necessary and appropriate, to address further threats.

I directed these strikes pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93–148). I appreciate the support of the Congress in this action.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Orrin G. Hatch, President pro tempore of the Senate.

The President's Weekly Address
October 15, 2016

Hi, everybody. On Thursday, I traveled to Pittsburgh for the White House Frontiers Conference, where some of America's leading minds came together to talk about how we can empower our people through science to lead our communities, our country, and our world into tomorrow.

Plus, we had some fun. I had a chance to fly a space flight simulator where I docked a capsule on the International Space Station. I met a young man who'd been paralyzed for more than a decade, but thanks to breakthrough brain implants, today, he can not only move a prosthetic arm, but actually feel with the fingers.

It's awe-inspiring stuff. And it shows how investing in science and technology spurs our country towards new jobs and new industries, new discoveries that improve and save lives. That's always been our country's story, from a Founding Father with an idea to fly a kite in a thunderstorm, to the women who solved the equations to take us into space, to the engineers who brought us the Internet. Innovation is in our DNA. And today, we need it more than ever to solve the challenges we face. Only through science can we cure diseases and save the only planet we've got and ensure that America keeps its competitive advantages as the world's most innovative economy.

And that's why it's so backward when some folks choose to stick their heads in the sand about basic scientific facts. It's not just that they're saying that climate change is a hoax or trotting out a snowball on the Senate floor. It's that they're also doing everything they can to gut funding for research and development, the kinds of investments that brought us breakthroughs like GPS and MRIs and put Siri on our smartphones.

That's not who we are. Remember, 60 years ago, when the Russians beat us into space, we

didn't deny *Sputnik* was up there. We didn't haggle over the facts or shrink our R&D budget. No, we built a space program almost overnight and beat them to the Moon. And then we kept going, becoming the first country to take an up-close look at every planet in the solar system too. That's who we are.

And that's why, in my first Inaugural Address, I vowed to return science to its rightful place. It's why in our first few months, we made the largest single investment in basic research in our history. And it's why, over the last 8 years, we've modernized the Government's approach to innovation for the 21st century. We've jump-started a clean energy revolution and unleashed the potential of precision medicine. We've partnered with the private sector and academia and launched moonshots for cancer, brain research, and solar energy. We've harnessed big data to foster social innovation and invested in STEM education and computer science so that every young person—no matter where they come from or what they look like—can reach their potential and help us win the future.

That's what this is about: making sure that America is the nation that leads the world into the next frontier. And that's why I've been so committed to science and innovation, because I'll always believe that with the right investments and the brilliance and ingenuity of the American people, there's nothing we cannot do.

Thanks, everybody, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 11:05 a.m. on October 13 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on October 15. In the address, the President referred to Dunbar, PA, resident Nathan Copeland, a patient at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center in Pittsburgh, PA; and Christine Darden, Margery Hannah, and Katherine G. Johnson, mathematicians and former employees, NASA's Langley Research Center in Hampton, VA. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 14, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on October 15. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the Montreal Protocol on Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer

October 15, 2016

For several years, the United States has worked tirelessly to find a global solution to phasing down the production and consumption of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). This super polluting greenhouse gas, used in air conditioners and refrigeration, can be hundreds to thousands of times more potent than carbon dioxide, and represents a rapidly growing threat to the health of our planet.

Today in Kigali, Rwanda, nearly 200 countries adopted an ambitious and far reaching solution to this looming crisis. Through the Montreal Protocol, a proven forum for solving environmental challenges like protecting the ozone layer, the world community has agreed to phase down the production and consumption of HFCs and avoid up to 0.5 degrees Celsius of warming by the end of the century, making a significant contribution towards achieving the goals we set in Paris. The plan provides financing to countries in need so that new air conditioning and refrigeration technology can be available for their citizens. It shows that we can take action to protect our planet in a way that helps all countries improve the lives and livelihoods of their citizens.

Today's agreement caps off a critical 10 days in our global efforts to combat climate change. In addition to today's amendment, countries last week crossed the threshold for the Paris Agreement to enter into force and reached a deal to constrain international aviation emissions. Together, these steps show that, while diplomacy is never easy, we can work together to leave our children a planet that is safer, more prosperous, more secure, and more free than the one that was left for us.

Remarks at Benjamin Banneker Academic High School
October 17, 2016

Hello, Bulldogs! [*Applause*] Hey! Good to see you guys. How's everybody doing? Oh, you all look good. You look good. Hey! How's everybody?

Well, it is so nice to see you guys. Everybody, have a seat though. Have a seat. I know you've been waiting here a while. Good thing you all had your phones with you. As the father of two teenage daughters, I know the whole time you were just like, "And then he said—girl, I couldn't believe it." [*Laughter*]

Anyway, it's so good to see you. [*Applause*] Thank you! A couple of people I want to acknowledge. First of all, I want to thank our Secretary of Education, who has done outstanding work, John King is in the house. And then my great friend and former Education Secretary and multiple winner of the three-on-three contest, as well as at the NBA All-Star Game—he can ball—Arne Duncan. We've got your mayor, Muriel Bowser is here. Give her a big round of applause. Your Representative, Eleanor Holmes Norton. And we are so grateful not only for their service to the country, but the amazing work they're doing with their philanthropic work and America's Promise, Colin and Alma Powell.

So, by now, you've settled into the new year. Right? Adjusted to classes. You're preparing for Spirit Week. Learning how to ballroom dance. [*Laughter*] I remember having to do that. Getting the nerve to text that cute girl or boy in your English class. [*Laughter*] I don't remember that; we did not have texts. We had to send little notes. And then we used to actually have to go up to somebody if we liked them and talk to them. So you—that may happen to you someday. [*Laughter*] Seniors are looking at colleges, taking tests, filling out all the forms. And Malia just went through this, so I know how tough this is for you and for the parents.

But as I'm winding down my Presidency, I was so impressed with Banneker the last time I was here in 2011 that I wanted to come back, because you're an example of a school that's doing things the right way. And I believe that if you're going to be able to do whatever you want to do in your lives—if you want to become a teacher or a doctor or start a business or develop the next great app or be President—then you've got to have great education.

We live in a global economy. And when you graduate, you're no longer going to be competing just with somebody here in DC for a great job. You're competing with somebody on the other side of the world, in China or in India, because jobs can go wherever they want because of the Internet and because of technology. And the best jobs are going to go to the people who are the best educated, whether in India or China or anywhere in the world.

So, when I took office almost 8 years ago, we knew that our education system was falling short when it came to preparing young people like you for that reality. Our public schools had been the envy of the world, but the world caught up. And we started getting outpaced when it came to math and science education. And African American and Latino students, in part because of the legacy of discrimination, too often lagged behind our White classmates, something called the achievement gap that, by one estimate, costs us hundreds of billions of dollars a year. And we were behind other developed countries when it came to the number of young people who were getting a higher education. So I said, when I first came into office, by 2020, I want us to be number one again. I want us to be number one across the board.

So we got to work, making real changes to improve the chances for all of our young people, from the time they're born all the way through until they've got a career. And the good news is that we've made real progress. So I just wanted to talk to you about the progress we've made, because you are the reason we've made progress: some outstanding young people all across the country.

We recently learned that America's high school graduation rate went up to 83 percent, which is the highest on record. That's good

news. More African American and Latino students are graduating than ever before. Right here in DC, in just 5 years, the graduation rate in the District of Columbia public schools went from just 53 percent to 69 percent. So DC's graduation rates grew faster than any other place in the country this year—this past year, which is something to be really proud of.

Now, of course, here at Banneker, you graduated 100 percent of your seniors last year. One hundred percent. It's been a while since I did math, but 100 percent is good. [*Laughter*] You can't do better than that. So what all these numbers mean is that more schools across DC and across the country are starting to catch up to what you guys are doing here at this school.

Now, some of the changes we made were hard, and some of them were controversial. We expected more from our teachers and our students. But the hard work that people have put in across the country has started to pay off.

And I just want to talk to you a little bit about some of the things that we did. It starts with our youngest learners. High-quality early education is one of the best investments we can make, which is why we've added over 60,000 children to Head Start. We called for high-quality preschool for every 4-year-old in America. And when I took office, only 38 States offered access to State-funded preschool. Today, it's up to 46. We're trying to get those last holdouts to do the right thing. And by the way, the District of Columbia leads the Nation with the highest share of children—nearly 9 out of 10—in high-quality preschool. And that's a big achievement.

We launched then a competition called Race to the Top, which inspired States to set higher, better standards so that we could outteach and outcompete other Nations and make sure that we've got high expectations for our students. DC was one of the winners of this competition. It upgraded standards, upgraded curriculum, worked to help teachers build their skills. And that, in part, is why DC has done so well.

We realized that in today's world, when you all have a computer in your pocket in those phones, then you need to learn not just how to use a phone, you need to learn computer science. So we're working with private and philanthropic partners to bring high schools into the 21st century and give you a more personalized and real-world experience. We're bringing in high-speed Internet into schools and libraries, reaching 20 million more students and helping teachers with digital learning. And coding isn't, by the way, just for boys in Silicon Valley, so we're investing more in getting girls and young women and young people of color and low-income students into science and engineering and technology and math.

And because we know that nothing is more important than a great teacher—and you've got some great teachers here, as well as a great principal at Banneker—we have focused on preparing and developing and supporting and rewarding excellent educators. You all know how hard they work. They stay up late grading your assignments. That's why you've got all those marks all over your papers. [*Laughter*] They pull sometimes money out of their own pockets to make that lesson extra special. And I promise you, the teachers here and the teachers around the country, they're not doing it for the pay, because teachers, unfortunately, still aren't paid as much as they should be. They're not doing it for the glory. They're doing it because they love you and they believe in you and they want to help you succeed.

So teachers deserve more than just our gratitude; they deserve our full support. And we've got to make their lives easier, which is why we enacted a law to fix No Child Left Behind, which gives teachers more flexibility to spend more time teaching creatively than just spending all their time teaching to a test. Give your teachers a big round of applause. They deserve it.

So we've made real progress, but here's the thing—and I think all of you know this because you go to this great school—a high school education these days is not enough. By 2020, two out of three job openings require some form of higher education. Now, that doesn't always mean a 4-year college degree, but it does mean—whether it's a 4-year university or a community college or some sort of training

program—you've got to get a little bit more than just what you're getting in high school.

It used to be that a high school job might be enough because you could go into a factory or even go into an office and just do some repetitive work, and if you were willing to work hard, you could make a decent living. But the problem is, repetitive work now is done by machines. And that's just going to be more and more true. So, in order for you to succeed in the marketplace, you've got to be able to think creatively; you've got to be able to work with a team; you've got to be able to work with a machine and figure out how to make it tailored for the specific requirements of your business and your job. All those things require some more sophisticated thinking than just sitting there and just doing the same thing over and over again. And that's why you've got to have more than just a high school education.

And if you doubt that, I just want to give you some statistics. If—compared to a high school diploma, just getting a degree from a 2-year school, going to a community college and getting an associate's degree, could earn you more than $300,000 over the course of your lifetime. And a 4-year degree earns you a million dollars more than if you just had a high school degree. Think about that. I mean, a million dollars, that's real money.

So one of the things that we're trying to do is to make it easier for you to access free money for college, to figure out how you can pay for your college without having a mountain of debt. And the key thing, as you know here at Banneker, but I want all the students around the country to do this—and Michelle and I and others have been really emphasizing this—is to fill out your FAFSA, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

How many people—how many seniors here have already filled out their FAFSA forms? All right. How many seniors here have not filled out their FAFSA forms? Fess up now. [*Laughter*] You sure? All right, I just want to make sure now. And, juniors, you can start getting ready now.

Because what the FAFSA does is, it puts you in the running for scholarships, grants, loans, work-study jobs, all to help you pay for college. And we've made it simpler than ever. And it's available right now at FAFSA.gov—FAFSA.gov. And since this is one of the most important investments of your life, next year's FAFSA is also going to direct you to something we created called our College Scorecard.

Now, here's what this is. It gives you comprehensive information on every college in America. Now, some of you who have started applying for colleges, you know about these college rankings, right? It's, like, oh, this is the best school. And some of that information is useful; some of it not so much. But unlike traditional rankings that focus on which school has the fanciest dorm or the nicest football stadiums or is the most expensive or the most exclusive, what our College Scorecard does is, it focuses on some of the things that really matter for your future. Things like how many students actually graduate from the school, because it's not enough just to enroll in college; you've got to graduate from college. How much money do their alumni earn? What percentage of their students can pay back their loans? And what we've done is, we've worked with companies like Google to put this information right at your fingertips.

So, for a decision this important, we want you to be able to comparison shop to figure out how do you get the best value for your money, just like if you were buying something on Amazon. Right? If you were buying a car or you're buying a phone or you're buying anything, especially if it's a pretty big purchase, you want to know ahead of time, is this legit? And what this does is makes you think about what your options are.

Now, you've got some great counselors here. Obviously, you should work with them. But not every student may be going to a school like Banneker that has as many good counselors to think about their college education. And using this College Scorecard is going to be helpful for them to do a little comparison shopping. Because you don't want to go to the school just because it's the closest one, and it turns out, it's more expensive and doesn't do as good of a job as if you were willing to maybe travel some-

place else, and it turns out that you could get the financial aid you need to go to a school that's more suited toward your needs. Right?

So we also reformed, by the way, the student loan system. When I came into office, you had tens of billions of dollars that were going to big banks, serving as middlemen for your student loans. We said, well, let's cut out the banks. Let's give the money directly to the students so they can afford college, and we can make the loans cheaper, and we can expand Pell grants.

And now, what we're trying to do is to push to make 2 years of community college free for every responsible student all across the country. [*Applause*] All across the country. And we're starting to work with colleges around—and universities around the country to bring down the cost of college so that at the end of 4 years of college you're not saddled with a whole bunch of debt, because nobody should be priced out of a higher education.

So, bottom line is, higher graduation rates, higher college attendance rates; more money for Pell grants and work to make sure that the interest rate on student loans haven't gone up; working to expand early childhood education and preschool; continuing to watch and work with States as they try to implement reforms to make K through 12 better; holding colleges more accountable for giving information so that students can make good decisions—we've made a lot of progress. We have made a lot of progress in terms of making sure that young people across the country get the kind of great education that you're getting here at Banneker. And I am really proud of what we've accomplished. I'm proud of what the District of Columbia has accomplished.

But I just want to be honest with you: We've still got more work to do. So, as I go, I'm giving you kind of a final report card, transcript on what more we've got to get done. [*Laughter*]

There are still too many States that are cutting back on public education. And part of the reason tuition is going up is because States aren't putting as much money into State education, universities, community colleges as they used to. That's why, if you're 18, by the way, you've got to vote to make sure that the folks who represent you actually are delivering.

We've still got too many States that have not really worked in a serious way to raise standards and improve performance. In too many school districts, we still have schools that, despite the heroic efforts of a lot of great teachers, are not fully preparing our kids for success because they just don't have the resources to do it or the structure to do it. We've still got too many high schools where a third of their students do not earn their diplomas on time.

For too many students in America, ZIP Code still determines how far they'll go. And that's not acceptable. Some of you probably have friends or family who are just as smart or talented or as capable as you, but they didn't have the same support or the right opportunities or didn't get in the right school, and so now don't have the same shot at success. Am I right? Because I know that's true in our family. Michelle and I, we've got cousins and friends who we've known since they were tiny, shorties, little kids—[*laughter*]—and they—we know how smart they are because they were just as smart as we were, but just the luck of the draw was, they didn't get the same chance as we did. And that's not right.

So that's why I started something called "My Brother's Keepers" initiative, because what we want to do is help more young people—especially kids of color—get mentorships and the resources and the guidance they need to succeed. And I'm going to stay involved with that even after I'm done being President. Because we all have a part to play in making sure every single child has every single opportunity to achieve his or her dreams.

That's what Banneker is all about. That's what you can see in somebody like Ifunanya. I mean, that's an incredible young lady who's going to succeed because she has an incredible school in addition to an incredible family. And so we're so proud of her.

There's another person I want to just call out: Amari McDuffie. Where's Amari? Where's Amari? There she is right there, right in front. So, hey, Amari. [*Laughter*] I'm going to talk about you for a second. [*Laughter*]

So Amari was born with a heart and a lung condition. And sometimes, she had to miss a lot of school because of her illness. And you know, Banneker is a pretty rigorous school, so she was worried about staying on top of her work. But everybody in this family rallied around her and made sure she was keeping up. Her history teacher, Mr. Goldfarb—where's Mr. Goldfarb? Is he here or did he cut assembly? [*Laughter*] So Mr. Goldfarb came to visit her when Amari was in the hospital for weeks, bought a—brought a card from the whole class. And so Amari, she was talking about the support everybody here gave her, and she said, "I believed in myself because my teachers believed in me."

And that's the kind of community that we want in every school, where you're looking out for each other and you're taking care of one another. And so now Amari plans to be a doctor so she can help kids who had illnesses like hers. And that's what's possible when we're all committed to each other's success; when we understand that no matter what you look like, where you come from, what faith you are, what—whether you're a boy or a girl—that you should have great opportunities to succeed. And that requires you to put effort into it.

Michelle and I talk a lot, because we travel around the world, and sometimes, we forget that there are places around the world where people have so little, but the kids are so hungry for an education. And they don't even have an actual roof over their head in some of their schools. And so, even if you're really poor in this country, you can succeed if you want to invest in the teachers and the community and everybody raises standards and believes in each other. And that's what we want all of America to believe, in every kid, because there's magic in each and every one of you. And we just have to help you unleash it and nurture it and realize it.

And by the way, it's because of young people like you that I leave the Presidency never more optimistic than I am right now, because I've met so many young people around the country whose energy and excitement and how you treat each other with respect. That gives me a lot of confidence, a lot of faith for our country.

So I know you guys are going to keep on working hard. You're going to keep making our communities proud. If us adults do our part and we stay focused on making sure every school is as great as this one and that every young person has those same opportunities and everybody has a teacher like Mr. Goldfarb looking out for them, I've got no doubt that we're going to continue to build a country where everybody has the chance to make of their lives what they will. And that's what America is all about.

All right. Proud of you, Bulldogs. Thank you. God bless you. God bless the United States of America. Fill out those FAFSA forms! Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:21 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to former Secretary of State Colin L. Powell and his wife Alma J. Powell, chair, America's Promise Alliance; Anita M. Berger, principal, Benjamin Banneker Academic High School; and Ifunanya Chukwu Azikiwe, student, Benjamin Banneker Academic High School, who introduced the President.

Remarks on Receiving Vice President Joe Biden's Report on the Cancer Moonshot and an Exchange With Reporters
October 17, 2016

The President. Well, as many of you know, at my final State of the Union, in addition to talking about the progress we had made on the economic front, some of the challenges and opportunities that we saw internationally, I announced my intention to set up a Cancer Moonshot, the notion being that given the incredible breakthroughs that we've seen in medicine, the potential that arises out of cracking our genetic code, that we now have the ca-

pability to accelerate progress on a disease that's plagued mankind for years.

And in invoking this idea of a moonshot, what I hoped to be able to galvanize the country around was the same sense of urgency and an all-hands-on-deck approach, where everybody pulled together—commercial drug companies, Government agencies, philanthropies, organizations like the American Cancer Society, patients organizations—all to look at where, if we really put our shoulder behind the wheel, where can we make the biggest impact as quickly as possible.

And to make this thing work, I could not think of somebody who is better to be in the mission control chair than my Vice President, Joe Biden, and our outstanding Second Lady—I don't know how can I—what's the phrase we use?

Jill T. Biden. Captain of the Vice Squad. [*Laughter*]

The President. Captain of the Vice Squad. That's what it is. [*Laughter*] I knew there was a phrase there. [*Laughter*]

I couldn't think of better folks to make this thing work than Joe and Jill. Now, part of it obviously is because of how profoundly they've been touched by the disease. But the truth is, all of us have. As some of you know, my mother died of cancer when she was younger than I am today. And there's not a family that, in some way, has not been impacted.

But given Joe and Jill's passion for the issue, but also the incredible organizational skills that Joe has shown in the past in mobilizing things like the Recovery Act, I thought that he was ideally suited for this project. He energetically and enthusiastically took on the challenge. Jill energetically and enthusiastically joined him. And what we're now doing is releasing a report: the results of the last 8 months of really intensive work by Joe and Jill, but also a terrific team. And what they've done is to mobilize researchers, scientists, doctors, hospitals, tech companies, as well as philanthropies and patients advocacy organizations, and traveled around the country and internationally in order to really figure out, how are we going to get this thing to achieve a serious liftoff?

As Joe will detail, what we've discovered is that the boundaries of medical knowledge around cancer, the fact that we now understand that what we used to lump together as one cancer might end up being 10 different cancers; the fact that we now have potential ways of treating the disease that don't just involve surgeons or people applying radiation or chemotherapy, but we are having all sorts of disciplines now participating; our ability to identify early people who may have a proclivity for a certain kind of cancer and take preventive action faster; the capacity of big data to analyze cohorts and our ability to now start our pooling together hundreds of thousands or millions of genetic samples that rapidly accelerate our ability to engage in research—all these things have been the subject of incredible work by this team and Joe and Jill.

And so, although we're going to be leaving soon, what I think we're going to be able to leave behind is a architecture and a framework for organizing these efforts over the next several years. And we're already beginning to see results as people across disciplines who previously were working in isolation are now joining together and realizing we've all got one objective.

And so I could not be prouder of the work that Joe, Jill, and this team have done. I gladly am going to be accepting this report, and more importantly, I'm looking forward not only to laying the ground work for the next administration to pick up the baton and run with it, but I know that Joe and Jill and I and Michelle will all continue to be involved after we've left this office in making sure that this works.

So thank you, Joe, for the great work.

Vice President Joe Biden. Well, thank you, Mr. President. And thank you—I'm going to give you the report. I want to——

The President. This is the executive summary.

Vice President Biden. Executive summary. Here——

The President. The report is much fatter. [*Laughter*] And I'm looking forward to all of you reading it.

Vice President Biden. Well, Mr. President, thank you for the trust you gave Jill and me to

do this. And as you said to me early, early on, it's clear, folks, that the Vice Presidency has no power, it's all reflective of the President's confidence. And the fact that you made clear and you laid out how you expected the administration to respond has given me very wide authority to coordinate all the agencies of Government that had any possible impact on this fight. And they've been incredibly cooperative.

Mr. President, in 1971, when Richard Nixon declared the war on cancer, he had no army, he had no school, he had no weapons. And the culture, the medical culture that surrounded the beginning of that effort is fundamentally different—should be fundamentally different—than it is today. Now we have, after 40 years of enormous accumulation of data, research, and brilliant minds who have devoted their attention to this, we've reached an inflection point, Mr. President. This is what we learned when we tried to figure out, like every family does, how to deal with Beau's cancer.

What we found out is, even 5 years ago, Mr. President, immunotherapy was viewed as some voodoo science; that is, how do you get the immune system to be energized and triggered to go out and kill the cancer in your body? Well, there's enormous breakthroughs that are being made. But before, the oncologists never worked with immunotherapists. They didn't work with virologists. They didn't work with chemical engineers and biological engineers.

So we started with our administration, Mr. President. And in addition to the obvious candidates to be engaged in this and have been engaged—from NIH to the National Cancer to HHS—we found out that there were other areas that were incredibly important—for example, NASA is now involved. Why? Because radiation, when it's used to kill what is left over from whatever the tumor has excised, it does enormous damage, sometimes more damage than the cancer.

And so there's new technologies. Nobody has better technology than NASA in how to deal with radiation, because that's what all our astronauts are constantly bombarded with. And so we've also gotten involved—the Department of—the Patent Office to move quickly.

So my point is, they have all cooperated and brought in all these new disciplines. In the private sector, Mr. President, the same thing is beginning to happen. And first, it was not on my watch. But now, for example, Mr. President, drug companies are realizing that taking more than one of their therapies or one of their drugs from different companies in combination may have a profound impact on curing and/or drastically damaging the cancer. And—but before, they wouldn't share it.

But so what we came up with is essentially a prelicensing agreement. There are all these drug companies are putting in all their drugs that they're experimenting with, ones that they have yet to get patents on—and saying, have at it, gentlemen and ladies, the researchers. And they know that if something comes from it, it's like when you stick money in a jukebox, you play a song—you're going to play a song by Beyoncé or whomever—there's already a licensing agreement. She gets a share of what gets dropped in the box. The same thing is happening.

So, Mr. President, the private sector stepped up as well. You have IBM having contact with Greg Simon, who heads this effort for me, and saying, we're prepared to work with the VA hospitals using Watson to go out and analyze all the tumor biopsies that are out there and find patterns. And it's the single largest hospital in the world, with the most cancer patients assembled any one place. We're going to find patterns in what causes this disease. Microsoft is engaged with us now, and providing—and Amazon—space in the cloud for genomic information, for the genomic data common.

So the point is, Mr. President, that the fundamental thing I come away with is that there is a need for a greater sense of urgency, because there is—there are available answers now to some cancers, and there is enormous opportunity in sharing data. You have our Department of Energy being able to do a million-billion calculations a second. If you could aggregate all the cancer data in one spot, imagine the capacity of being able to analyze all that to find patterns and what—why a particular ther-

apy works on you, but not on me, works on one patient, but not another. So there's real excitement.

And the second thing, Mr. President, that I came away with—and I'm going to be leaving here and going over—there's 200 oncologists, researchers, virologists, philanthropists, et cetera, over in the OEB. And, Mr. President, I'm going to release the Task Force report that you authorized me to organize. And it has another 35 specific recommendations beyond the 45 that were already put forward.

But the essence of it all gets down to one thing: We need a culture in 2016 that matches the accumulation of information and data we now have that did not exist when this culture was set up in 1971. That's what everybody seemed to be arriving at, and it's really exciting, Mr. President.

I am confident, absolutely confident that we'll be able to accomplish in the next 5 years what otherwise would have taken us 10 years. I am confident we're going to find new prevention techniques out there. For example, the HPV virus now in fact is able to be—there's a vaccination you can have to prevent our children from getting cervical cancer, throat cancer, a whole range of other things.

So, Mr. President, in conclusion, I look forward to the day when your grandchildren and my grandchildren and their children show up at the office to get their physical to start school and get a shot for measles and they get a vaccine that affects significant numbers of cancers. We are very close to reaching that point and finding out what is the fundamental root cause of what makes a gene not turn off, a rogue gene, a cancer gene continue to eat up parts of the body. And I'm really optimistic, Mr. President.

And thank you again for the confidence in letting me lead this effort. And like you said, in my case, I'm going to devote the rest of my life to working on this. And I think we're perilously close to making some gigantic progress.

The President. Well, you've done a great job. Jill has done a great job.

Two other things that I just want to note. Number one, because of Joe's really active engagement with Congress, this has strong bipartisan support.

Vice President Biden. It's true.

The President. And we are hopeful that the already significant funding stream that goes to NIH and other Government agencies is significantly supplemented and directed by the work that Joe and Jill have done.

Secondly, this all comes down to, how does it impact patients? And so Joe, I think, has done a great job in engaging people who are going through battling cancer right now and finding ways that we're not just coming up with cures, but we're also making sure that these systems are set up so that they're easier for people to access, so that there's a broad, diverse group of people who are subject of studies so that—because, as Joe said, what may work for an Asian American man may not be the exact same treatment or approach that might work for a young Caucasian woman. And that means that we've got to bring in data sets and engage communities across America and not just a sliver.

And the fact that this team has done so much work to reach out to every corner of the country is reflective of the fact that this is an issue that binds us together. This is a common enemy. And we're really lucky to have such a great couple of generals here to help us charge the mountaintop.

Vice President Biden. Mr. President, let me make one concluding statement. Two reports you're asking for. One is a vision statement: where we go from here, what we have to do. The second is a much thicker report that I'm going to be delivering to the Task Force that lays out all the things we recommend being done right now.

The President. Right.

Vice President Biden. And so, again, Mr. President, thank you for your confidence in me.

The President. Good. Great job. Thank you, everybody.

Q. Mr. President—[*inaudible*]?

The President. We're talking about cancer today, Bill [Bill Plante, CBS News]. Thank you, sir. Thank you.

Appreciate you. Thank you, guys. Think we can take at least about a 5-minute break from that? Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:54 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, Vice President Biden referred to musician Beyoncé G. Knowles-Carter; and Greg Simon, Executive Director, White House Cancer Moonshot Task Force.

Remarks at a Welcoming Ceremony for Prime Minister Matteo Renzi of Italy
October 18, 2016

President Obama. Good morning!

Audience members. Good morning!

President Obama. Buon giorno!

Audience members. Buon giorno!

President Obama. Today is bittersweet for Michelle and I because this marks the final official visit and state dinner of my Presidency. But——

Audience members. Aww!

President Obama. It's okay. [*Laughter*] We've saved the best for last. And so, on behalf of Michelle and myself, and on behalf of the American people, it is my great honor to welcome, from Italy, Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and Mrs. Agnese Landini.

As Americans and Italians, we're here because of each other. America's Founding Fathers—Washington, Jefferson, Adams—drew inspiration from Cincinnatus, Cicero, Cato. Prime Minister Renzi, you've spoken with great emotion about the American soldiers of World War II who liberated Italy so that families like yours could live in freedom. Today we again pay tribute to all those who risked their lives—and often gave their lives—including the heroes of the Italian Resistance, so that we can stand here today as two free peoples.

And on a personal level, today is a chance for Michelle and me to reciprocate the incredible warmth and hospitality that the Italian people have shown us on each of our visits to Italy. When, years ago, Michelle and I traveled through Tuscany, back when we didn't have kids so we could have a really good time. [*Laughter*] You remember that? [*Laughter*] Then when, in my first term, we brought our daughters to Rome to experience the timeless beauty of the Eternal City. And when Michelle and our daughters and my mother-in-law went to Milan for last year's Expo. All of which has prompted Malia and Sasha to ask the question posed by generations of visitors to Italy: When can we go back? [*Laughter*]

Of course, this visit also reflects the deep friendship between our two peoples and the Americans' love of all things Italian. We love the food. We love the fashion. We love the wine. We love Sophia Loren. [*Laughter*] And nowhere does our love for Italy run deeper than among the millions of very proud Italian Americans, including those who are here today.

Now, I'm not fortunate enough to claim Italian anecestry myself, although my name does end in a vowel. [*Laughter*] But I do consider myself an honorary Italian. I was raised in part by my grandmother, and as any Italian will tell you, you listen to your *nonna*. [*Laughter*] And because of Michelle, like every good Italian home, the White House now has a garden, with tomatoes and garlic. [*Laughter*]

Let me also say that in the Italian American experience—immigrants who often came here with nothing, who had to learn the language and carve out new lives, and who overcame prejudice and discrimination, relying on the love of family and the strength of their faith, and then have gone on to succeed in every walk of life—we see a truth that we must never forget, and that is that America was built by immigrants, America is stronger because of immigrants, America is great because of immigrants.

And as President, I'm especially grateful for my partnership with my good friend, Matteo. I mean, look at him. He's young, handsome. He's put forth a vision of progress that's not rooted in people's fears, but rather in their hopes. He knows that, as nations, as an—individuals, we have the power to achieve great change. In Italy, he's challenging the status quo with bold reforms. He likes to tweet a lot. [*Laughter*] We also have in common the wis-

dom to marry remarkable women, leaders in their own right, who have dedicated their efforts to giving children every opportunity to succeed, including a good education to our sons and our daughters.

So I'm told that there's an Italian saying—forgive my accent—*"Patti chiari, amicizia lunga."*

Prime Minister Renzi. Wonderful!

The President. So, roughly translated, it means that clear conditions lead to long friendships. When it comes to Italy and the United States, the underlying conditions could not be more clear. We're united not only by our interests, but also by our values: by our love of liberty, by our commitment to the dignity of every human being, which is why I can say without hesitation that Italy is one of our strongest allies and one of our closest friends.

And in Italy, and in Prime Minister Renzi, the United States has a partner with whom we share a common vision: inclusive, growing economies that create opportunity and reduce injustice and inequality; a Europe that is whole and free and at peace; a strong NATO alliance committed to our collective defense and united in the face of aggression and terrorism; empathy for the migrant and compassion for the refugee; partners in clean energy as our generation takes the boldest steps ever to save our planet from climate change; and partners in development, because when Italians and Americans work together, we can help save the world's most vulnerable people from the ravages of hunger and disease.

As our Italian friends know, Matteo began his life of faith and service in the Scouts. And ever since, he's been guided by the words of the Scouts' founder: "Leave this world a little better than you found it." Well, Matteo, Agnese—and to the Italian people—we are proud to call you allies and friends, today and always, because we know that when we stand together as Americans and Italians, we can leave the world a little better than we found it.

So, to all of you, welcome to the United States. *Benvenuti amici miei.*

Prime Minister Renzi. Mr. President, Mrs. Obama, my American friends, *cari amici italiani e italoamericani*: Thank you for such a warm welcome here. President Obama organized very perfectly everything, also the sun. Incredible organization. [*Laughter*] And Agnese and I are delighted to be here. It's an incredible honor, it's an incredible gift, this opportunity, on this solemn occasion, to celebrate the relation between our two nations. Obviously, we are ready in every moment to host you and your family: in every moment, as also in every city, also Florence. [*Laughter*] But we are so, so excited for this occasion and this opportunity.

The enduring friendship and the bond between our countries has never been so strong, so deep, and so wide. Italy and the United States work together globally, fighting terrorism, providing security, creating economic opportunity. But I think, Mr. President, if you think about our history, we can imagine five centuries ago when a young Italian called Amerigo Vespucci gave his name to America. And 70 years ago, so many young Americans sacrificed their lives to give freedom back to Italy. Thank you again to these people.

Today, we, together, we are facing the challenge of give the name to a new era together: a new era, a new season full of opportunities, also full of uncertainties. But my personal opinion is, the name of the future has to be freedom. The name has to feature—has to be education, not intolerance; sustainability, not destruction; trust, not hate; bridges, not walls. The name of the future has to be growth, not austerity. And in a time of fear, we have to give answer with audacity of hope, not only in United States.

Mr. President, Italians love history. The Romans used to say, *"Historia magistra vitae"*—history is a teacher of life. We think history will be kind with you, Mr. President. Under your leadership, a country hit by crisis started growing again. Day after day, you have made change that improved lives, helped environment, and created opportunities for poor people.

I think there are a lot of people who think that politics is only about screaming, fighting each other. Hate creates division. You are different, Mr. President. We are different. We

think politics is making a difference. And this is the reason: Because we love history, but at the same time, we need a future. We love our past, but we need the future.

In the history of Italy, there are a lot of incredible personalities—Michelangelo, Leonardo, Galileo—the most incredible geniuses of the past. But they are not our stakeholders. Our stakeholders in this time are our children, the future of the new generation. And for this reason, I think Italy is ready to build with United States of America a great season of new opportunities, a future—common future—based on strengths: civil rights, education, culture, soft power, the real great bond between the United States and Italy.

So, Mr. President, we have a great poet, Dante Alighieri, who used an expression—wonderful. I am not able to translate in English, I'm sorry. *"Fatti non foste a viver come bruti, ma per seguir virtute e canoscenza." Fatti non foste a viver come bruti.* It means our mission is not full of brutality, but full of values and knowledge. This is the choice for us today. This is the mission for the new generation of politician. This is the ambition. I think we will never be tired of being a true friend, a solid partner, of United States of America.

In this spirit, thank you so much for your leadership, Mr. President. And thank you so much for your friendship. We are so honored to be here, because here is there is heart and our identity. *Viva gli Stati Uniti d'America. Viva l'Italia. Viva la libertà.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:26 a.m. on the South Grounds at the White House, where Prime Minister Renzi was accorded a formal welcome with full military honors. In his remarks, the President referred to Agnese Landini, wife of Prime Minister Renzi; and actor Sophia Loren. He also referred to his mother-in-law Marian Robinson.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Matteo Renzi of Italy
October 18, 2016

President Obama. Please, everybody, have a seat. *Salve.* Once again, I want to welcome Prime Minister Renzi and his delegation back to the White House. As we all saw this morning, Matteo's English is much better than my Italian. Michelle and I are looking forward to hosting Matteo and Agnese at tonight's state dinner. But as I believe our Italian friends say, *prima il dovere, poi il piacere*—[*laughter*]—which means "first duty, then pleasure." Tonight's dinner will be a pleasure. Today we're focused on our duties: our work to advance the security and the prosperity of our peoples.

I want to begin by once again expressing our deep gratitude, as Americans, for the extraordinary alliance with Italy. The United States is lucky to have many strong allies around the world. Few are as strong and as reliable and as capable as Italy. In good times and in bad, we can count on each other. And I want to thank the Government and the people of Italy for the hospitality and the generosity they show to the many American military personnel and families who are stationed in Italy, far away from home.

Matteo, please also know that our thoughts continue to be with the people of Amatrice. And I know that you're still working closely with local governments there to recover and rebuild from the devastating earthquake that took place this summer.

In our work together over the past 2 years, I've come to count on Prime Minister Renzi as one of my closest partners and friends on the world stage. By virtue of his progressive vision, his energy, the reforms that he's pursuing—which are sweeping—the bold vision that he has for Italy and the world, I think Matteo embodies a new generation of leadership, not just for Italy, but also for Europe. And this is critically important because, as I've said repeatedly over the last several years, a strong and united

and confident and prosperous Europe, anchored in liberal traditions and democracy and rights, that's a necessity for the United States, and it's a necessity for the world. It's a strategic interest of ours that we have a successful, united Europe. And today we focused on a number of key challenges facing Europe, our trans-Atlantic alliance, and the globe.

On the economic front, we agree that our focus has to remain on growth, creating jobs and prosperity for our people. Matteo has been pursuing some very bold economic reforms, structural reforms in Italy that are not easy, that are often resisted by existing institutions and inertia. But the Italian economy has shown signs of growth. It still has a long way to go to put Italy on a path to long-term and sustainable growth. And the upcoming referendum to modernize Italy's political institutions are something the United States strongly supports because we believe that it will help accelerate Italy's path towards a more vibrant, dynamic economy, as well as a more responsive political system.

Matteo shared his thoughts on how, in the wake of Brexit, the European Union can move forward and focus on delivering security and prosperity that Europeans deserve. And we both agreed that without an emphasis on demand and growth, and investment in infrastructure and projects that can put people back to work—particularly young people—that much of the economic fragility in Europe will continue. And by the way, that has an impact around the world, including on the American economy as well.

We both reaffirmed our strong support for negotiations around the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, which can support jobs and exports and innovation and growth on both sides of the Atlantic.

We talked about, as NATO allies, our unified determination to defend every ally and to continue to strengthen NATO's defense and deterrence posture. Italy will be a key contributor to NATO's Joint Task Force, which is now operational and can deploy anywhere in Europe on short notice. We discussed our shared concerns around the situation in Ukraine and the importance of keeping sanctions, including EU sanctions, in place until Russia and Ukraine are both implementing commitments under the Minsk agreement. And we are determined to work diplomatically with the Normandy Group in order to achieve that goal.

I thanked Italy very strongly for its leading role in the coalition against ISIL. After the United States, Italy is the second largest contributor of forces in Iraq. Italian forces are helping to stabilize cities through its training of police after they are liberated from ISIL. The start of Iraqi operations to liberate Mosul is another major step forward. Mosul, as many of you know, is Iraq's second largest city, and ISIL has been entrenched there for more than 2 years. Perhaps a million civilians are still living there. And so, in addition to rooting out ISIL, our focus jointly is on the safety and the humanitarian aid for civilians who are escaping the fight. That's going to be a top priority for both our governments.

My—Mosul will be a difficult fight, and there will be advances and there will be setbacks. But I am confident that just as ISIL has been defeated in communities across Iraq, ISIL will be defeated in Mosul as well, and that will be another step towards their ultimate destruction. Meanwhile, Italy continues to be one of our strongest counterterrorism partners as we work together to prevent terrorist attacks in our countries.

More broadly, we agreed to continue our strong support of the Libyan Government of National Accord, which, as we've seen in recent days, continues to face challenges to its authority. Italy provided critical diplomatic support to Libya's efforts to forge the Government. Together, we intend to continue to support the Government of National Accord as it works to eject ISIL from Libya, provide stability and services throughout the country. And as ISIL tries to expand its presence in Afghanistan, Italy continues to play a vital role as we train and assist Afghan forces and support Afghan development.

We discussed the continued need for strong, coordinated responses to the largest migrant and refugee crisis in Europe since World War

II. As the leader of EU's naval operation in the Mediterranean, Italy and its partners have helped to save hundreds of thousands of lives. As NATO agreed in Warsaw, the alliance is moving ahead with plans to increase its support of these EU operations. And, Matteo, I want to commend you and the Italian people. For the leadership in Europe that you have shown as an eloquent voice for a collective, orderly, and humane response to this crisis is in keeping with our values and our shared commitment to human dignity.

And finally, the past two weeks have been a powerful reminder that when our countries work together we can leave the world a little bit better than we found it. Because the United States and Italy joined with other nations across the globe, we've brought the Paris Agreement on climate change into force. We reached an agreement to limit aviation emissions. And through the Montreal Protocol, nearly 200 nations just this past week agreed to phase down production and consumption of dangerous hydrofluorocarbons, which are a enormous contributor to greenhouse gases and a major step towards achieving the goals that we set in Paris. Meanwhile, Italy continues to be a strong partner for development, especially to combat hunger and malnutrition around the world.

So, once again, Matteo, thank you for your friendship. Thank you for your partnership. I could not ask for a better partner. And the American people could not ask for a better friend and ally than Italy. So *grazie*.

Prime Minister Renzi. I'm not sure your Italian is worse than my English because——

President Obama. It's slower anyway.

Prime Minister Renzi. ——you improve very quickly, your Italian.

Mr. President, *grazie mille.*

[*At this point, Prime Minister Renzi spoke in Italian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter as follows.*]

Prime Minister Renzi. Thank you. Thank you kindly for the reception. What we said about the great honor which is here today for Italy is something I'd like to confirm, is something that I'd like to underline with great strength. But as President Obama said, our meeting was also an occasion to talk about our duties, and after that, to talk about pleasure.

In those topics that have to do with our political times, I want to thank the United States of America for the extraordinary support for the battle that Italy is having in our country, within Europe to affirm a paradigm of growth and not only of austerity at all levels. The United States are a model in this sense, 2008–2016. Constantly, your country has indicated, shown us the way of how to get out of the biggest crisis after the war. I believe that Europe can and should do more. Italy considers the American example as the reference point in this battle.

Of course, we also know that we have to do our homework at home, the structural reforms. And therefore, what the President just reminded us of is the priorities, starting with the labor market reform.

I had to ask for his forgiveness because I used the expression, "Jobs Act," which is obviously something that I copied. But this is something that is open source, and I think that we can copy each other's expressions from the great initiatives that were set forth by the Obama Presidency. This has created 588,000 new jobs in Italy, which for Italy are still insufficient, but at least they are a first step to leave our difficult situation.

Thank you, President Obama, for the work you've done as a leader in the energy field. Today, Italy is one of the main nations that sustains and upholds the vision of COP 21 in Paris. We will be working in Marrakesh in November. The next few years, we will be working in this direction in order to have clean energy, sustainable environment for our children.

And thank you for the work that we've done together in the field of culture—in the cultural field. I believe that we find ourselves in a season of our political lives. Maybe some people choose hatred, the culture of intolerance. We have to bet on liberty. We have to bet on our identity, the values that make this country extraordinary. And Europe—Europe has a desperate need to find its own soul. And this is due to its children. This is due to its grandchil-

dren. So this is the first topic of conversation that we had with President Obama.

In terms of Italy, we want to make sure that the G–7, in Taormina, in Italy, in the beautiful Sicily is an important, a relevant appointment, and we commit ourselves, because the work that we began together, dear President, under your Presidency may continue. The legacy of President Obama not—will not only remain in the United States. This has to be absolutely clear and absolutely loud. It will involve the Europe, and we feel totally committed in this direction.

And finally, before I talk about international policies, I want to tell you that we thank you for remembering Amatrice. Amatrice is a small village in the center of Italy which has been affected by a dramatic earthquake. It's also the town where *pasta all'Amatriciana* was born. This is one of the typical products of Italy. And so this small community at Amatrice that had so many dead has not left its courage.

Dear President, when you come to visit Italy in the next few months, I believe that we will want you to taste, thanks to the cooks in Amatrice, one of the best pastas that you have ever tried in your life, particularly *pasta all'Amatriciana*. I think that this is a way of saying to this community—where a community that has been folded by this terrible tragedy—that food can be an element of identity in the future.

In terms of our international policies, the Italian agenda is in agreement with the American agenda. We are thoroughly convinced of the need to affirm values of being able to live together, of being civil throughout the world. That's why we commit ourselves to work with the international coalition in all theaters, starting in Iraq, in Mosul, where Italian troops are supporting an operation to save the dam in Mosul. And we believe that it's fundamental, it's crucial not to succumb to the culture of fear. In the future, we cannot know what will happen, but if there's a great inheritance left by the American Dream, this is the best way to proceed.

Recently, a lot has been said about innovation and technology, and this has made people think that the future is a threat. I am completely convinced that in Italy and the United States we can help the new generations to think of the future not only of—think of this as a great opportunity. And for this reason, the agenda that the United States has presented today is an agenda that we agreed upon and we will be working together on it.

Thank you so much, Mr. President.

President Obama. Okay, we're going to take a few questions. And I will start with Kevin Freking of AP.

Russia-U.S. Relations/Republican Presidential Nominee Donald J. Trump/Federal Bureau of Investigation/Department of State

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Donald Trump says Hillary Clinton talks too tough about Vladimir Putin and that both of you insult the Russian leader. He also said that, if elected, he might meet with the Russian leader before his Inauguration. What do you think of Trump's approach to Putin? And how would it affect America's interest on the international stage?

Secondly——

President Obama. I can still hear.

Q. Secondly, does it distress you that folks at the FBI and State Department talked about the proper level of classification of e-mails that were on Secretary Clinton's server? Would you acknowledge the appearance of impropriety? And should State Department officials look into this further?

And for Prime Minister Renzi, with the critical governing referendum happening soon in your country, what would passage mean for your ability to lead that country? And what would failure mean to your political future, as well as to Italy's role in the European Union?

President Obama. Well, I'm going to be a little more subdued in my discussions of the Republican nominee in this context than I might be on the campaign trail. But let me just speak broadly about Russia.

When I came into office, Russia, under the previous administration, had invaded parts of Georgia, had created a frozen conflict there. There was a new President, and we tried to initiate a more constructive path with respect to

U.S.-Russia relations. And I think we showed Russia plenty of respect, acknowledging enormous differences and different values, but also trying to find ways in which we could cooperate together.

We initiated the New START Treaty. We assisted Russia with respect to its ascension to the WTO. We worked on some common international challenges together. And when the previous President was replaced with Mr. Putin, I met with him and we discussed again ways in which we could constructively work together.

The challenge that we've had with Russia is very much centered on Russian aggression in some very particular areas around the world. In Ukraine, where they have engaged in similar conduct to what they did in Georgia, and even there, we've tried to broker, and work with the Europeans to broker, a Minsk agreement that would peacefully resolve those issues.

In Syria, one of my earliest meetings with Putin was to suggest to him that if Asad stayed in power, given the brutality with which he had treated his own people, you would see a civil war that would not be good for the Syrians, certainly, but would not be good for the world anywhere. Rather than to work with us to try to solve the problem, he doubled down on his support for Asad, and we know the situation that exists there.

So any characterization that somehow we have improperly challenged Russian aggression or have somehow tried to encroach on their legitimate interests is just wrong. And Mr. Trump's continued flattery of Mr. Putin and the degree to which he appears to model many of his policies and approaches to politics on Mr. Putin is unprecedented in American politics, and is out of step with not just what Democrats think, but out of step with what, up until the last few months, almost every Republican thought, including some of the ones who are now endorsing Mr. Trump.

So you'll have to explain to me how it is that some of the same leaders of the Republican Party who were constantly haranguing us for even talking to the Russians and who consistently took the most hawkish approaches to Russia—including Mr. Trump's selection for Vice President—now reconcile their endorsement of Mr. Trump with their previous views.

The bottom line is, is that we think that Russia is a large, important country with a military that is second only to ours, and has to be a part of the solution on the world stage rather than part of the problem. But their behavior has undermined international norms and international rules in ways that we have to call them out on. And anybody who occupies this office should feel the same way, because these are values that we fought for and we protected.

We can't go around talking about human rights or freedom of the press or democracy or freedom of religion or nondiscrimination or basic laws of war or the sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries no matter how small and then extoll the virtues of somebody who violates those principles.

And Mr. Trump rarely surprises me these days. I'm much more surprised and troubled by the fact that you have Republican officials who, historically, have been adamantly anti-Russian and, in fact, have attacked me for even engaging them diplomatically, now supporting and, in some cases, echoing, his positions. It's quite a reversal. You'll have to ask them how to explain it.

With respect to the State Department and the FBI reports, I think you've heard directly from both the FBI and the State Department that the notion or the accounts that have been put out there are just not true. And you can question them again, but based on what we have seen, heard, learned, some of the more sensational implications or appearances, as you stated them, aren't based on actual events and based on what actually happened and, I think, derive from sort of overly broad characterizations of interactions between the State Department and the FBI that happen a lot and happen between agencies.

I think that covers me.

Prime Minister Renzi. What the forum—I know 2016 is not a very good year to organize a referendum. But I think the Italian referendum is very simply a message because it's

about the fight against bureaucracy. And we need a great investment against bureaucracy in Italy for a lot of reasons. We changed 63 governments in 70 years. A few times, we joke about it with the President, because it's unbelievable in a country to have a government change 1 year—every year. But it's normal. The discussion, the political discussion is very strong.

My opinion is very easy. If in December we will win this referendum for Italy, it will be easy—more easy to continue the battle to change Europe, because structural reforms are important for Italy, but are important also for institutions in Brussels—in Europe.

So the only consequence, constitutional reform apart, in the political debate in my view is, if we win, Italy will be stronger in the debate in EU. And so I work strongly and hardly to achieve the victory.

Ah, sorry. Platero, Sole 24 Ore.

Q. Grazie.

Prime Minister Renzi. You're American, not Italian.

Q. I'm American; I'm Italian.

Prime Minister Renzi. American citizens.

Q. I will ask the question in English—or in Italian.

Prime Minister Renzi. Okay.

U.S. Economy/European Union

[*The reporter spoke in Italian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter as follows.*]

Q. So let's talk about the referendum, because you hope to win, of course. But we've found many investors at Wall Street who are worried about the fact that you might lose the referendum. These are investors that have faith in Italy and that threaten, if there is a negative result in terms of the reforms, to just leave. So what can you tell these investors in order to reassure them to—if there is a negative outcome, will you stay on? Will you continue with the reforms?

And one last thing. This evening, will you bring some wine to the dinner with the President? This is an Italian custom.

[*The reporter spoke in English as follows.*]

Q. I agree with the Prime Minister, your accent is beautiful, truly beautiful.

The President. Grazie.

Q. So your Italian accent, of course.

The President. I've got my hands to—*grazie*. [*Laughter*]

Q. Yes. On growth, you seem to be in agreement that there is a need to sort of go ahead with the policy that you have pursued on being more flexible on the fiscal side. The problem is that Brussels is very rigid about it. And it's very rigid with the Italian efforts, therefore jeopardizing these efforts. What can you say to Brussels, especially after Brexit—they don't seem to be moving on that front—how important it is to move forward in that direction? And do you think that in case the referendum will not go well for the Prime Minister, he should stay on and continue in his reforms? Thank you.

[*Prime Minister Renzi spoke in Italian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter as follows.*]

Prime Minister Renzi. I have a feeling— and I think that rightly so—our American friends are a little bit more interested in November 8 than in the Italian vote on constitutional reform. And so are we, might I add.

But in terms of what you were asking, very, very briefly, this is a time in which many investors throughout the world are coming back to invest in Italy. We're extremely happy about this. We're happy about the investments on innovation in terms of technology. Apple is investing in Naples. Amazon is going to open an artificial intelligence center in Turin. So, for the entire economic and financial world, well, they're starting to see Italy as an area in which to create opportunities and business, therefore, open doors.

I don't believe that there will be any major disasters if the "no" wins at the referendum. But in order to have no doubts, I'd rather win the referendum. I'll do everything I can do; this atavistic doubt will not be able to come about. But what is fundamental, what is true is that the message goes through. This referendum does

not have to do with the great world events, the great world issues. Very simply: Do you want to simplify the institutional system in Italy, giving greater stability and certain times in which to have greater stability? This is something to simply things in our country.

And based on the question that was asked to the President on Europe, we do respect the European rules, and we're totally inside the European rules, although sometimes we do this halfheartedly. We'd like to do things differently. But so long as rules don't change, we will respect them, because Italy has made of its reputation one of the key words in its mandate. We work to change them, but if they're there, we are going to respect them.

Now, what will happen within the next few months will be seen, as a great singer—Italian singer says—we will discover this by living. So I'm almost certain that the "yes" will win so you will have no grounds to ask this question.

President Obama. During the course of my Presidency, I have had repeated conversations with Brussels, with Angela, with François, and others around how we could most effectively recover from the crisis of 2007, 2008. It is fair to say that we have made more progress more quickly. And what I've tried to point out was, the reason we were able to make progress was, we focused very early on in providing a large infusion of demand through our fiscal policies: rebuilding roads, bridges; investing in schools, teachers, clean energy; putting people back to work; tax cuts, put money into pockets of consumers; saving the auto industry. But then, also, what was very important was quickly trying to fix the banks and infusing capital and making sure they were more stable, more transparent, and would attract confidence so that the financial system was working again.

And look, I'm proud of our economic track record. We have grown faster and created more jobs and, this past year, seen incomes rise and poverty fall more quickly than a lot of our counterparts in Europe.

Now, I recognize that Europe is a more complicated collection of states and it's more difficult to move and some are in the euro zone and some are not. And so I don't expect that everything we've done can immediately translate to Europe. And there's some parts of what Europe does that we could learn from in terms of the social safety net, for example.

But what I do know is that given the very slow growth that's taken place in Europe, or contraction, over what is almost a decade now, you have a generation of European youth who are not attaching themselves to the labor market fast enough. And if you don't reverse some of those trends, then it becomes a generational loss of income, of wealth, of economic dynamism.

And now that countries like Italy and others have made real progress on their finances and their deficits and there's more market confidence in their position, now would be a good time, I believe, to refocus attention on growth and making investments. Because one of the reasons that we've been able to cut our deficits by two-thirds is not simply because we cut spending by two-thirds. We disciplined spending, but we also grew fast enough that more revenue came in. And that's one of the best ways for you to arrive at a sound fiscal position.

And monetary policy alone is not sufficient. I think Mario Draghi and the European Central Bank have done good work trying to maintain a positive trajectory in Europe. But ultimately, there's only so much monetary policy can do if it's not combined with fiscal policy. And my hope would be that—Matteo is right, Italy has been true to its word in Europe and met its obligations—but my hope would be, the debate broadens as Europe moves forward around how to grow more quickly, put more people back to work, see incomes rise, create a greater sense of momentum and optimism. Because I do believe that there is a connection between stagnation and some of the less constructive populist impulses that have been rising up.

And those trend lines about Europe do concern me, because if you look at the European experiment over the last 40 years—I said this in Hannover—there's probably been no group of people who have enjoyed more prosperity and more peace over the last several decades than a united Europe. If it begins now splinter-

ing because their sense is, the global capitals and elites are not attentive to the ordinary concerns of people, that would be a tragedy. And my hope is that that discussion, led by Matteo and others, will continue.

And by the way, yes, I think if—I won't weigh in on the referendum, but the reforms Matteo is initiating, certainly on the economic side, are the right ones. And in a global, Internet-driven world, governments have to be able to move fast and quickly and transparently. And so I am rooting for success, but I think you should hang around for a while no matter what.

Ayesha Rascoe [Reuters].

2016 Presidential Election/U.S. Electoral System/Republican Presidential Nominee Donald J. Trump/Iraq/Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) Terrorist Organization

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. I'd like to ask you about the election. Donald Trump is telling his supporters that the election is rigged and asking them to monitor certain areas on election day. How concerned are you about the potential for violence? And what about after election day, are you worried the results of the election may be distrusted?

And for Prime Minister Renzi, the offensive in Mosul has begun. Are you concerned about what happens after liberation? And, Mr. President, if you want to weigh in on that as well, I'd appreciate it.

President Obama. I do.

Q. Thanks.

President Obama. Okay. One of the great things about America's democracy is, we have a vigorous, sometimes bitter, political contest. And when it's done, historically, regardless of party, the person who loses the election congratulates the winner, reaffirms our democracy, and we move forward. That's how democracy survives, because we recognize that there is something more important than any individual campaign, and that is making sure that the integrity and trust in our institutions sustains itself. Because democracy, by definition, works by consent, not by force.

I have never seen in my lifetime or in modern political history any Presidential candidate trying to discredit the elections and the election process before votes have even taken place. It's unprecedented. It happens to be based on no facts. Every expert, regardless of political party, regardless of ideology—conservative or liberal—who has ever examined these issues in a serious way will tell you that instances of significant voter fraud are not to be found; that, keep in mind, elections are run by State and local officials, which means that there are places like Florida, for example, where you've got a Republican Governor whose Republican appointees are going to be running and monitoring a whole bunch of these election sites. The notion that somehow if Mr. Trump loses Florida, it's because of those people that you have to watch out for, that is both irresponsible, and by the way, it doesn't really show the kind of leadership and toughness that you'd want out of a President.

If you start whining before the game is even over, if whenever things are going badly for you and you lose, you start blaming somebody else, then you don't have what it takes to be in this job. Because there are a lot of times when things don't go our way or my way. That's okay. You fight through it, you work through it. You try to accomplish your goals.

But the larger point that I want to emphasize here is that there is no serious person out there who would suggest somehow that you could even rig America's elections, in part because they're so decentralized and the numbers of votes involved. There's no evidence that that has happened in the past or that there are instances in which that will happen this time.

And so I'd advise Mr. Trump to stop whining and go try to make his case to get votes. And if he got the most votes, then it would be my expectation of Hillary Clinton to offer a gracious concession speech and pledge to work with him in order to make sure that the American people benefit from an effective Government. And it would be my job to welcome Mr. Trump, regardless of what he's said about me or my differences with him on my opinions,

and escort him over to the Capitol, in which there would be a peaceful transfer of power.

That's what Americans do. That's why America is already great. One way of weakening America and making it less great is if you start betraying those basic American traditions that have been bipartisan and have helped to hold together this democracy now for well over two centuries.

With respect to Mosul, we are seeing the Iraqi forces, with the support of the coalition that includes the United States and Italy and other nations, moving forward and encircling Mosul. The intention is to drive ISIL out of what was its first major urban stronghold and what continues to be one of the key organizational and logistical and leadership hubs for ISIL.

I'm confident that we can succeed, although it's going to be a tough fight and a difficult fight. It is Iraqis who are doing the fighting. And they are performing effectively and bravely and taking on significant casualties. There will be ups and downs in this process, but my expectation is, is that ultimately it will be successful. And this will be, I think, a key milestone in what I committed to doing when ISIL first emerged, which was, we were going to roll them back and we are going to ultimately drive them out of population centers and we will destroy them and defeat them so that they are not in a position to carry out terrorist attacks against our peoples or our friends and allies or against innocent people inside of Iraq and Syria. And we've seen just steady progress on this front.

Now, you ask a very important question, which is, if in fact we are successful, how do we deal with what could be a humanitarian crisis? Because ISIL, when it occupies these territories, it bleeds them dry. It feeds off them. It oppresses the local populations. It's not very good at governance. And so just basic functions like electricity or water start running down. People are fleeing from their homes. There will be significant displacement.

This has all been part of the coalition planning process in conjunction with the United Nations, in conjunction with major aid organizations. And so we have put together plans and infrastructure for dealing with a potential humanitarian crisis that are as extensive as the military plans. That doesn't mean that we don't have to pay attention to it. And executing will be difficult; it's going to still be a tough environment to operate under. And no doubt, there will be instances where we see some heartbreaking situations if in fact large numbers of people flee. It's hard when you leave your home. It's hard when you leave your home and you already didn't have a lot because you were living under an oppressive barbarous regime. It's hard to leave your home in a war zone.

So it's not something that I expect will be easy, but I think it perhaps hasn't been publicized enough, at least in the American press, the degree of planning and assets and resources that we're devoting to this very important problem. Because if we aren't successful in helping ordinary people as they're fleeing from ISIL, then that makes us vulnerable to seeing ISIL return and feeding on the resentments in the aftermath of Mosul being liberated. And so there's a strategic, as well as humanitarian, interest in us getting that right. Okay?

Prime Minister Renzi. I think about Mosul, the considerations of President are very clear. For Italian side, we are particularly committed about dam. There is a dam—a dangerous dam—and we support an Italian company who will work to restore the dam, because it could be a great problem for the population.

And for the rest, we are totally engaged with the rest of coalition to ensure to the Iraqi people the possibility to have a future. And let me be very great [grateful]* to the Italian Army, particularly Italian Carabinieri, who provide in this country to learning the local police. So we are not worried for the future if we will bring Mosul because we think sooner or later that we will destroy Daesh. And the reconstruction and the rebuilding will be a priority for every mem-

* White House correction.

ber of international community. Italy is engaged in the work with the United States and the other alliance.

Last. *Prego, l'ultima.* Last—[*inaudible*].

Q. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. President. *In italiano e anzi in inglese*.

European Migration Crisis/Libya/Central American Migration to the U.S./European Union

[*The reporter spoke in English as follows*.]

Q. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. President. The Mediterranean represents a geopolitical priority for Italy, mainly because of the constant flow of migrants. And is there common strategies on this and common strategies on Libya? And can Italy act as a bridge between Europe and Africa? And how American administration can help the efforts of the Italian Government, because Europe sometimes leave alone Italy to face the challenge? Thank you.

[*Prime Minister Renzi spoke in Italian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter as follows.*]

Prime Minister Renzi. I'm going to answer in Italian for the first channel, TG1. Obviously, our position is always the same one. Europe has to be more convinced and look toward Africa with more conviction. And from this stance, we can't go every time to ask for help to the United States without doing our part. The United States are busy in all the international theaters. And the ones that are closer to us, we obviously need the support of our best friend, because the United States are this: our best friend.

But we also have to start an Italian and European strategy. We can't always just sit and wait for this type of support. Therefore, the issue of the Mediterranean and Africa has been left aside during the last 10 years in the European Union. We have to give it priority again. We have to work as the Commission had foreseen it would do. But it's not doing it with the necessary speed, and we will do whatever we can with the agreements with certain states, with the five states that are our priority. We have to work for Africa to be a priority, including a priority from the point of view of resources, local development.

We will talk about this during the G–7 in Sicily next year. And in terms of investments, the political investment—which perhaps in the last few years has been sorely lacking—before asking for help for—from the United States, which is something we gladly do, Italy and Europe have to do their part. Italy will increase its efforts for international cooperation in the ranking of G–7 for international cooperation. We were the last in the classification, seven—the seventh in the position, the list of seven. It's not a good position. But we will reach the fourth place in the ranking in terms of GDP, which each of us proposes.

So we have an increase in terms of the money in international cooperation, in funds. And in terms of Libya, you know that we are working. We want to stabilize the Government. We want to make sure that there is a block of all these brothers and sisters that leave their country. Every time they go to sea, they risk dying. We're happy and we're very proud to help save lives. But the ocean is one of the worst places to do that. But we don't want the Mediterranean to become a cemetery, so we have to have a long-term strategy. We spoke about this. And we have to have short-term strategies as well.

We're very proud of what we're doing, but we know that this method cannot go on forever. We cannot think of being in charge by ourselves of all the problems of Libya and Africa. And from this stance, in the—on Thursday and Friday, at the European Council, we will talk about this.

President Obama. [*Inaudible*]—extensive topic of conversation. Let me just make a few points. Number one, it is a strategic interest of the United States to make sure that the migration crisis that's been taking place in Europe is solved. It's a strategic interest because of the terrible loss of life that we see as people attempt to reach Europe, but also because of the distorting effects that it can have on European politics if the sense is that the influx of migration is disorderly, chaotic, and overwhelms

European countries. And so we are deeply committed in Europe's success in resolving this issue effectively.

Now, obviously, there are a lot of contributors to it. So we are very focused on strengthening the Government of National Accord, as I indicated. And Secretary John Kerry and others are working with his counterparts on a multilateral basis to strengthen the Government of National Accord, resolve tensions that exist between the different portions of Libya, and then to be able to invest and build in their capacity to control their borders and their waterways. Because if we don't have a partner on the other side of the ocean, it's going to continue to be a problem. That's point number one.

Point number two: We are deeply appreciative of the generosity and humanitarian impulses of the Italian people in rescuing so many people through Operation Sophia. What we did in Warsaw during the NATO meeting was to indicate that although that is primarily a EU mission, NATO and the United States and our naval assets are prepared to assist in a robust way where appropriate. And it's just a matter of coordinating with Europe to find out—and Italy and other countries—what it is that you need, we will help. The same way that we do with respect to helping to enforce the agreement between Turkey and the European Union on that portion, that body of water.

The third point, as Matteo pointed out, is more long term, and that is, trying to help these countries that are having difficulties, where people feel either unstable, insecure, or just hungry and in search of opportunity. How do we help them develop in such a way where people feel that they can succeed and raise their families without fleeing to more developed countries? That is a longer term proposition, but we have to begin to make the investments now.

I mentioned to Matteo, we have obviously different issues with respect to migration. And net migration into this country has actually been flat—in some cases, even decreased—or we've seen reverse flows, particularly with respect to Mexico. But one area where we have seen a big spike over the last several years is actually from the smaller countries in Central America where the economy is doing poorly; agriculture has done poorly, in part because of changing weather patterns; violence brought on by narcotraffickers.

So Vice President Biden, I gave him the charge of working with those countries to come up with a development plan. Congress, on a bipartisan basis, supported us putting more money into these countries for development, more effective policing, dealing with fighting the narcotraffickers in a more effective way, investing in young people. But that's not going to happen overnight. That will be a decade-long process, potentially.

In the meantime, we insist that those countries cooperate with us to send a message to the populations that it is a dangerous trip to reach the United States, and if you get here, you're likely to be turned back, to try to discourage a dangerous—this dangerous passage but also to try to undermine the human traffickers who are preying on the desperation of these people to make money.

So all those strategies have to be employed. And the one thing I would encourage is—and I've said this whenever I've visited Europe—you can't have a situation where Italy, Greece, Germany are bearing the entire burden. If in fact you have a European Union, then you're unified not just for the benefits, but also for the costs. And I do think it is important for Europe collectively to be invested in solving this problem and not just leave it to one country, in the same way that here in the United States, obviously, it's—we're an actual nation-state as opposed to a union of separate states. But we would not abandon one State and just say, here, you deal with an entire problem and good luck with that. Right? If we have solidarity and benefit from that solidarity on a whole range of issues, then that means you also have joint responsibilities. Okay?

Q. Sir, on Central American, numbers have actually increased——

President Obama. That's what I just said. I said Central America, they've increased, David [David Nakamura, Washington Post]. Why——

Q. I was wondering if you could comment about whether—what that says about policy—[*inaudible*].

President Obama. No, actually, David, they went—they spiked heavily in 2014, went down significantly in 2015, have gone back up this year, in part because there's still desperation in Central America, but are still not at the levels they were in 2014.

But I appreciate you shouting out a question, since I'm sure there are a lot of other colleagues of yours who would want to do the same. [*Laughter*]

Thank you very much, everybody. Appreciate it.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 11:44 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Agnese Landini, wife of Prime Minister Renzi; Prime Minister Dmitriy Anatolyevich Medvedev, in his former capacity as President, and President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; President Bashar al-Asad of Syria; Republican Vice Presidential nominee Gov. Michael R. Pence of Indiana; Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany; President François Hollande of France; Mario Draghi, President, European Central Bank; Gov. Richard L. Scott of Florida; and Democratic Presidential nominee former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. Prime Minister Renzi referred to Daesh, another name for the ISIL terrorist organization.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Significant Narcotics Traffickers Centered in Colombia
October 18, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1622(d), provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia declared in Executive Order 12978 of October 21, 1995, is to continue in effect beyond October 21, 2016.

The circumstances that led to the declaration on October 21, 1995, of a national emergency have not been resolved. The actions of significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States and to cause an extreme level of violence, corruption, and harm in the United States and abroad. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12978 with respect to significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring Prime Minister Matteo Renzi of Italy
October 18, 2016

President Obama. Good evening, everybody!

Audience members. Good evening!

President Obama. Buona sera!

Audience members. Buona sera!

President Obama. On behalf of my—Michelle and myself, welcome to the White House. And welcome to the final state dinner of my Presidency. But in the immortal words of a great Italian American, Yogi Berra, "It ain't over till it's over." And so we have a wonderful evening ahead of us as we celebrate the great alliance between the United States and Italy with our great friends, Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and Mrs. Agnese Landini.

Now, I have to say, this is a remarkable crowd. I will confess that, at first, I was a little nervous about this dinner. After all, Matteo is called *Il Rottamatore*—The Scrapper, The Demolition Man. [*Laughter*] And Roberto Benigni is here as well, and he has promised not to jump on the tables. [*Laughter*] Ask any Italian or Italian American, and they'll tell you that the dinners can get somewhat animated. People can get excited, especially if your grandmother thinks you're not eating enough. And so Michelle and I decided to just think of this as a typical Italian Sunday dinner: surrounded by family and great friends—*paisans*—and pasta.

But tonight we're reminded that American democracy has been graced by the touch of Italy. Our declaration that "all men are created equal" was penned by Thomas Jefferson, and it was a concept shared by his friend, also from Florence, *Firenze*, Filippo Mazzei. We stand before the Lincoln Memorial and see the work of the Piccirilli brothers. We look up at the dome of the U.S. Capitol and marvel at the touch of Brumidi. Then again, some days our Presidential campaigns can seem like Dante's "Inferno." [*Laughter*]

Most of all, we see the spirit of Italy—and the friendships between our people—in so many proud Italian Americans. I suspect that many of you here tonight are thinking of your own families—parents, grandparents, great-grandparents—who left the old country, who toiled and sacrificed and gave everything they had so that the next generation could succeed. And your presence here tonight shows that America is a place where if you work hard, no matter what you look like, what your last name is, how many vowels you have in your name, you can make it if you try. And even if we are not Italian American, or Mets fans, we can celebrate that Mike Piazza is finally in the Baseball Hall of Fame. [*Laughter*]

I also want to take this occasion to once again thank my great friend Matteo. He may be the youngest Prime Minister in modern Italian history—he makes me feel old, which is unfortunate. [*Laughter*] When I came in I was the young guy; now he's the young guy. [*Laughter*] But from the first time we met, I could see that he represented the energy and the optimism, the vision and the values that can carry Italy, and Europe, forward. He is, as you say in Italy, *buono come il pane.*

Matteo, I cannot thank you enough for your excellent partnership as we've worked to advance the security and prosperity of our citizens and the dignity of people around the world. I understand that when you were growing up, your mother would tell you stories about Robert Kennedy's commitment to justice and that she would end by telling you, "Matteo, fight." As you fight for the cause of reform, know that we stand with you. I believe that Italy, and the world, will continue to benefit from your leadership for many years to come.

Now, one of the reasons that I'm so confident that Matteo will continue to make outstanding contributions is because he has an outstanding partner in Agnese. Our wives keep us humble. As our Italian friends know, Matteo's first claim to fame—when he was just 19 years old—was, he was on Italy's version of "Wheel of Fortune." [*Laughter*] This is a true story. And Agnese points out that several of the sweaters and the suits that he wore were too big—which is an affront to Italian fashion. [*Laughter*] Matteo may deny it, but there's video, and you can judge for yourself. [*Laughter*] Giorgio Armani is here, and he would be ashamed to know that the Italian Prime Minister used to wear things like this. [*Laughter*]

Now, you are not alone, because when Michelle was in Milan for last year's Expo, she spoke with some young people about the importance of eating slowly and savoring your

food—unlike President Obama, who, she said, sometimes "shovels" his food down—[*laughter*]—which is true. [*Laughter*] So the point is that Matteo and I both married up. And because of our wives, we eat better, we dress better, we are better. And we thank you both.

In closing, I just want to reminisce about my last visit to Rome. Thanks to Matteo's Minister—Ministry of Culture, I had the opportunity to visit the Coliseum. And one of the perks of being President is, you can go to the Coliseum and nobody else is there. It was late in the day. It was quiet. The Sun was going down. And as I walked across those ancient stones, worn by the history of 2,000 years, it was a humbling reminder of our place here on Earth.

In the grand sweep of time, each of us is here only for a brief moment. So many of the things that we focus on each day—the political ups and downs, the successes and the setbacks—those things are fleeting. What matters in the end is what we build. What matters is what we leave behind, the things that will endure long after we are gone. As the poet Virgil reminded us, "Fortune favors the bold."

And so I want to propose a toast: To the enduring alliance between the United States and Italy; to our friends, Matteo and Agnese; and to the friendship between the Americans and the Italians. In pursuit of the world we can build for future generations, may we always be bold; may fortune smile upon us. *Salute.* Cheers.

[*At this point, President Obama offered a toast.*]

And with that, let me bring to the stage the Prime Minister of Italy, Matteo Renzi.

Prime Minister Renzi. Mr. President, Madam First Lady, dear American friends, *cari amici italiani*: It is an incredible honor. It's an incredible privilege to be here with you on this occasion of the last state dinner of President Obama. I am really excited and really great because I think this is a special moment for the history of this country, as the Presidency of President Obama was a special moment in the life of this great country.

So thank you so much. Thank you. It's an honor for Italy, dear Barack, but it's also an honor for us. So thank you all, from Agnese and myself, for your warm welcome.

But I'm really in a difficult situation, because it's impossible for me to reply after the President Obama, and also this afternoon I spent time to imagine an organization of something to give thanks. And it's impossible. I think, for Mr. President, that we can organize after the finish of your service a dinner in Florence, after the little walk in Uffizi's Gallery and in front of David, and we can prepare Sasha and Malia to verify if really ice cream—Italian ice cream—is better on the water, and then not a state dinner, but we with the *osteria,* with the Florentine wine and Tuscan wine we can taste. And we can verify if the tomatoes of the garden of White House are better than tomatoes of Italian products. [*Laughter*] We can try that.

I know, Michelle, your tomatoes are great. But after the last week's, let me be very frank: Your speeches are better than your tomatoes. [*Laughter*] And thank you so much. Thank you so much as Prime Minister, but thank you so much also as father of a young daughter.

And, Barack, you know I'm a huge fan of you. You know I follow from the first speech in—first, not first—first speech for the Presidential run in February 2007 in Illinois. But when I listened to the speech of Michelle in Philadelphia, I think finally—finally—maybe when I see—"when they go low, we go high," I told you, finally, I found someone of the same level of Barack Obama: Michelle Obama. [*Laughter*] So this is good.

Just—but let me conclude with a personal consideration. I come from a city called Florence, so I really—I love lots the history of my country. And during the Renaissance in Florence, masters and students used to work together to produce masterpieces and also not masterpieces, but the goal is masterpiece—masterpieces they have endured across centuries. And those workshops—this workshop was called *bottega. Bottega* was the place in which masters and students together tried to do better, tried to build a future. New generation acquired inside the *bottega* a comprehensive vision of the future. And I think, Mr. President,

dear Barack, this is what you have done for us in this period.

Eight years, very important for international community, not only for the United States of America. And I think your service was a service as a master of Renaissance, because you work with us to give us an opportunity and we worked together exactly with the spirit of *bottega*: try to make better, try to give a special opportunity to new generations.

So, as a Florentine, I think I'm really grateful to you for your service and also for your message of the ideal state of government because with your message, a lot of new leaders around the world today could imagine the future as a good place in which imagine our destination and our generation.

Thank you so much for that, Mr. President. Thank you so much, master of Renaissance.

So, in Italy, there is an expression, is an expression who come from the shared table, a shared moment of a—particular moment in the dinner and lunch—is an expression who come from Latin: *cum* and *panis. Cum* from Latin is "with"; *panis* is "bread." *Cum panis* comes a lot of things; the expression "company" comes exactly from that. Why? Because the values in the table are exactly the values of sharing not only bread, not only wine, not only food, but sharing a friendship and common values. I think this is the real relation between the United States of America and Italy. We share the same values, the same friendship. And yes, in the table, *cum piú panis,* we share the bread. We share the food. We share also the wine. But we share above all the future and the common values. For all the reasons, I propose a toast: To President Obama, to First Lady Michelle, thank you so much for your incredible journey. Thank you so much for your incredible service. Thank you so much for the values you inspire not only in the United States of America, but around the world. Thank you, President.

[*Prime Minister Renzi offered a toast.*]

Thank you, President. *Salute.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:21 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Agnese Landini, wife, and Laura Bovoli, mother, of Prime Minister Renzi; and fashion designer Giorgio Armani. Prime Minister Renzi referred to his daughter Ester.

Remarks on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act in Miami, Florida

October 20, 2016

The President. Hello, hello, hello! Hello, Miami! Thank you so much. Well, everybody, have a seat, have a seat. It is good to see all of you! It's good to be back at Miami Dade, one of my favorite institutions! Love this school.

I want to thank your longtime president and great friend, Eduardo J. Padrón, and to all the faculty and staff and, of course, most importantly, the students, for hosting me. I want to say how grateful I am. I want to thank the wonderful elected officials who are here today. I'm going to just point out two outstanding Members of Congress: Debbie Wasserman Schultz and Ted Deutch.

So this is one of my last visits here as President. Now, once I'm not President——

Audience members. No!

The President. No, no, the good news is, once I'm no longer President, I can come more often. Right now, usually, I can only come to Florida when I'm working. [*Laughter*] But when I'm out of office, I can come here for fun. [*Laughter*]

But the first thing I want to say is thank you for your support and thank you for the opportunity and the privilege you've given me to serve these past 8 years. I remember standing just a few blocks north of here in the closing days of the 2008 campaign. And at that point,

we were already realizing that we were in the midst of the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes. We didn't know where the bottom would be. We were still in the middle of two wars. Over 150,000 of our troops were overseas. But thanks to the hard work and the determination of the American people, when I come here today, the story is different.

Working together, we've cut the unemployment rate in Florida by more than half. Across the country, we turned years of job losses into the longest streak of job creation on record. We slashed our dependence on foreign oil, doubled our production of renewable energy. Incomes are rising again; they rose more last year than any time ever recorded. Poverty is falling; fell more last year than any time since 1968. Our graduation rates from high school are at record highs. College enrollment is significantly higher than it was when we came into office. Marriage equality is a reality in all 50 States.

So we've been busy. This is why I've got gray hair. [*Laughter*] But we did one other thing. We fought to make sure that in America, health care is not just a privilege, but a right for every single American. And that's what I want to talk about today. [*Applause*] That's what I want to talk about here today.

You've heard a lot about Obamacare, as it's come to be known. [*Laughter*] You've heard a lot about it in the 6½ years since I signed it into law. And some of the things you've heard might even be true. But one thing I want to start with is just reminding people why it is that we fought for health reform in the first place. Because it was one of the key motivators in my campaign.

And it wasn't just because rising health costs were eating into workers' paychecks and straining budgets for businesses and for governments. It wasn't just because before the law was passed, insurance companies could just drop your coverage because you got sick, right at the time where you needed insurance most.

It was because of you. It was because of the stories that I was hearing all around the country and right here in Florida, hearing from people who had been forced to fight a broken health care system at the same time as they were fighting to get well.

It was about children like Zoe Lihn, who needed heart surgery when she was just 15 hours old, just a baby, just a infant. And she was already halfway to hitting her lifetime insurance cap before she was old enough to walk. Her parents had no idea how they could possibly make sure that she continued to make progress. And today, because of the Affordable Care Act, Zoe is in first grade, and she's loving martial arts. And she's got a bright future ahead of her.

We fought so hard for health reform because of women like Amanda Heidel, who lives here in South Florida. As a girl, she was diagnosed with diabetes, and that's a disease with costs that can add up quickly if you don't have insurance, can eat away at your dreams. But thanks to the Affordable Care Act, Amanda got to stay on her parent's plan after college. When she turned 26, Amanda went online. She stopped—shopped for an affordable health insurance plan that covered her medications. Today, she's pursuing a doctorate in psychology.

And Amanda said that the Affordable Care Act "has given me the security and freedom to choose how I live my life." The freedom and security to choose how I live my life. That's what this was all about: Zoe and Amanda, the people who I get letters from every single day describing what it meant not to fear that if they got sick or a member of their family got sick, if they, heaven forbid, were in an accident, that somehow they could lose everything.

So because of this law, because of Obamacare, another 20 million Americans now know the financial security of health insurance. So do another 3 million children, thanks in large part to the Affordable Care Act and the improvements, the enhancements that we made to the Children's Health Insurance Program. And the net result is that never in American history has the uninsured rate been lower than it is today. Never. And that's true across the board. It's dropped among women. It's dropped among Latinos and African Americans, every other demographic group. It's worked.

Now, that doesn't mean that it's perfect. No law is. And it's true that a lot of the noise around the health care debate, ever since we tried to pass this law, has been nothing more than politics. But we've also always known—and I have always said—that for all the good that the Affordable Care Act is doing right now, for as big a step forward as it was, it's still just a first step. It's like building a starter home—or buying a starter home. It's a lot better than not having a home—[*laughter*]—but you hope that over time you make some improvements.

And in fact, since we first signed the law, we've already taken a number of steps to improve it. And we can do even more, but only if we put aside all the political rhetoric, all the partisanship, and just be honest about what's working, what needs fixing, and how we fix it.

So that's what I want to do today. This isn't, kind of, a rah-rah speech. [*Laughter*] I might get into the details. I hope you don't mind. [*Laughter*]

So let's start with a basic fact. The majority of Americans do not—let me repeat—do not get health care through the Affordable Care Act. Eighty percent or so of Americans get health care on the job through their employer. Or they get health care through Medicaid or they get health care through Medicare. And so, for most Americans, the Affordable Care Act, Obama has not affected your coverage, except to make it stronger.

Because of the law, you now have free preventive care; insurance companies have to offer that in whatever policy they sell. Because of the law, you now have free checkups for women. Because of the law, you get free mammograms. Because of the law, it is harder for insurance companies to discriminate against you because you're a woman when you get health insurance. Because of the law, doctors are finding better ways to perform heart surgeries and delivering healthier babies and treating chronic disease and reducing the number of people that, once they're in the hospital, end up having to return to the hospital. So you're getting better quality even though you don't know that Obamacare is doing it. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. Thanks, Obama.

The President. Thanks, Obama.

Because of the law, your annual out-of-pocket spending is capped. Seniors get discounts on their prescription drugs because of the law. Young people can stay on their parent's plan, just like Amanda did, because of the law. And Amanda was able to stay on her parent's plan and then get insurance after she aged out, even though she has what used to be called a preexisting condition, because we made it illegal to discriminate against people with preexisting conditions.

By the way, before this law, before Obamacare, health insurance rates for everybody—whether you got your insurance on the job or you were buying it on your own—health insurance rates generally were going up really fast. This law has actually slowed down the pace of health care inflation. So every year, premiums have gone up, but they've gone up the slowest in 50 years since Obamacare was passed. In fact, if your family gets insurance through your job, your family is paying, on average, about $3,600 less per year than you would be if the cost trends that had existed before the law were passed had continued. Think about that. That's money in your pocket.

Now, some people may say, "Well, I've seen my copays go up" or "My networks have changed." But these are decisions that are made by your employers. It's not because of Obamacare. They're not determined by the Affordable Care Act.

So, if the Affordable Care Act, if Obamacare hasn't changed the coverage of the 80 percent of Americans who already had insurance, except to make it a better value, except to make it more reliable, how has the law impacted the other 15 or 20 percent of Americans who didn't have health insurance through their job or didn't qualify for Medicaid or didn't qualify for Medicare?

Well, before the Affordable Care Act, frankly, you were probably out of luck. Either you had to buy health insurance on your own because you weren't getting it through the job and it was wildly expensive and your premiums were going up all the time, and if you happened to get sick and use the insurance, the in-

surer, the next year, could drop you. And if you had had an illness like cancer or diabetes or some other chronic disease, you couldn't buy a new insurance because the insurance company's attitude was: "You know what, this is just going to cost us money. We don't want to insure you."

So, if you were buying—trying to buy health insurance on your own, it was either hugely expensive or didn't provide very effective coverage. You might buy a policy thinking that it was going to cover you. And it was sort of like when I was young and I bought my first car. I had to buy health—I had to buy car insurance and I won't name the insurance company, but I bought the insurance because it was the law, and I got the cheapest one I could get because I didn't have any money and it was a really beat-up car. [*Laughter*] And I remember, somebody rear ends me, and I call up the insurance company thinking maybe I can get some help, and they laughed at me. They're all, like, what, are you kidding? [*Laughter*] It didn't provide any coverage other than essentially allowing me to drive. [*Laughter*]

Well, that's what it was like for a lot of people who didn't have health insurance on the job. So that meant that a lot of people just didn't bother getting health insurance at all. And when they got sick, they'd go—have to go to the emergency room.

Audience member. Or if you got pregnant.

The President. Well, that's true too. [*Laughter*] And so you're relying on the emergency room, but the emergency room is the most expensive place to get care. And because you weren't insured, the hospital would have to give you the care for free, and they would have to then make up for those costs by charging everybody else more money. So it wasn't good for anybody.

So what the Affordable Care Act is designed to do is to help those people who were previously either uninsured or underinsured. And it worked to help those people in two ways.

First, we gave States funding to expand Medicaid to cover more people. In DC and the 31 States that took us up on that, more than 4 million people have coverage who didn't have it before. They now have health insurance.

Second, for people who made too much to qualify for Medicaid even after we expanded it, we set up what we call marketplaces on healthcare.gov so you could shop for a plan that fits your needs, and then we would give you tax credits to help you buy it. And most people today can find a plan for less than $75 a month at the healthcare.gov marketplace when you include the tax credits that Government is giving you. That means it's less than your cell phone bill, because I know you guys are tweeting a lot—[*laughter*]—and texting and selfies. [*Laughter*] And the good news is that most people who end up buying their coverage through the marketplaces using these tax credits are satisfied with their plans.

So not only did Obamacare do a lot of good for the 80-plus percent of Americans who already had health care, but now it gave a new affordable option to a lot of folks who never had options before. All told, about another 10 percent of the country now have coverage. The Affordable Care Act has done what it was designed to do: It gave us affordable health care.

So what's the problem? Why is there still such a fuss? [*Laughter*] Well, part of the problem is the fact that a Democratic President named Barack Obama passed the law. And that's just the truth. [*Laughter*] I mean, I worked really, really hard to engage Republicans; took Republican ideas that originally they had praised, said, "Let's work together to get this done." And when they just refused to do anything, we said, all right, we're going to have to do it with Democrats. And that's what we did.

And early on, Republicans just decided to oppose it, and then they tried to scare people with all kinds of predictions: that it would be a job killer, that it would force everyone into Government-run insurance, that it would lead to rationing, that it would lead to death panels—[*laughter*]—that it would bankrupt the Federal Government. You remember all this. And despite the fact that all the bad things they predicted have not actually happened; despite the fact that we've created more jobs since the

bill passed than—in consecutive months than any time on record; despite the fact that the uninsured rate has gone down to its lowest levels ever; despite the fact that it's actually cost less than anybody anticipated and has shown to be much less disruptive on existing plans that people get through their employers; despite the fact that it saved Medicare over $150 billion, which makes that program more secure—despite all this, it's been hard, if not impossible, for any Republican to admit it.

They just can't admit that a lot of good things have happened and the bad things they predicted didn't happen. So they just keep on repeating, we're going to repeal it. We're going to repeal it, and we're going to replace it with something better, even though, 6½ years later, they haven't. They still haven't shown us what it is that they would do that would be better.

But—and this is actually the main reason I'm here—just because a lot of the Republican criticism has proven to be false and politically motivated doesn't mean that there aren't some legitimate concerns about how the law is working now. And the main issue has to do with the folks who still aren't getting enough help. Remember, I said 80 percent of people, even before the law passed, already had health insurance. And then we expanded Medicaid and we set up the marketplaces, and another 10 percent of people got health insurance. Well, but that still leaves that last 10 percent. And the fact that, that last 10 percent still has difficulties is something that we've got to do something about.

Now, part of the reason for this is, as I already mentioned to you, not every State expanded Medicaid to its citizens, which means that some of the most vulnerable working families that the law was designed to help still haven't gotten insurance. As you may have heard, Florida is one of those States. [*Laughter*] If your Governor could put politics aside——

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo, vote.

If your Governor would just put politics aside and do what's right, then more than 700,000 Floridians would suddenly have access to coverage. And by the way, that would hold down costs for the rest of you because there'd be less uncompensated care in hospitals. And it means that people who did sign up for the marketplace, who oftentimes may be sicker qualify for Medicaid, and so they're not raising costs in the marketplace.

In fact, if the 19 States who so far have not expanded Medicaid would just do so, another 4 million people would have coverage right now all across the country.

So that's step number one. And that's, by the way, just completely in the control of these Governors. They could be doing it right now. They could do it tomorrow.

Now, the second issue has to do with the marketplaces. Although the marketplaces are working well in most of the States, there are some States where there's still not enough competition between insurers. So, if you only have one insurer, they may decide we're going to jack up rates because we can, because nobody else is offering a better price.

In those States where the Governor or legislature is hostile to the ACA, it makes it harder to enroll people because the State is not actively participating in outreach. And so, as a consequence, in those States, enrollment in the plan—especially enrollment of young people—has lagged.

And what that means is that the insurance pool is smaller, and it gets a higher percentage of older and sicker people who are signing up. Because if you're sick or you're old, you're more likely to say, well, I'm going to sign up, no matter what, because I know I'm going to need it. If you're young and healthy, like you guys, you say: "Eh, I'm fine. Life's good."

So you have more older and sicker people signing up, fewer younger and healthier people signing up, and that drives rates up, right? Because the people who use health care most end up being in the insurance pool; people who use it least are not.

And then, in some cases, insurers just set their prices too low at the outset because they didn't know what the insurance pool was going to look like, and then they started losing money. And so now they've decided to significantly increase premiums in some States.

Now, it's these premium increases in some of the States in the marketplace that sometimes attracts negative headlines. Remember, these premium increases won't impact most of the people who are buying insurance through the marketplace because even when premiums go up, the tax credits go up to offset the increases. So people who qualify for tax credits, they may not even notice their premiums went up because the tax credit cover it.

And keep in mind that these premium increases that some of you may have read about have no effect at all if you're getting health insurance on the job or through Medicaid or Medicare. So, for the 80 [percent]* plus people who already had health insurance, if your premium is going up, it's not because of Obamacare. It's because of your employer or your insurer even though, sometimes, they try to blame Obamacare—[*laughter*]—for why the rates go up. It's not because of any policy of the Affordable Care Act that the rates are going up.

But if you are one of the people who doesn't get health care on the job, doesn't qualify for Medicaid, doesn't qualify for Medicare, doesn't qualify for a tax credit to help you buy insurance because maybe you made just a little bit too much money under the law, these premium increases do make insurance less affordable. And in some States, the premium increases are manageable. Some are 2 percent or 8 percent, some 20 percent. But we know there are some States that may see premiums go up by 50 percent or more.

And an extreme example is Arizona, where we expect benchmark premiums will more than double. Now, part of this is because Arizona is one of those States that had really low average premiums, among the lowest in the country. So now insurance companies basically are trying to catch up, and they also don't have a lot of competition there. And meanwhile, in States like Florida, the failure to expand Medicaid contributes to higher marketplace premiums. And then there are some other States that just because of the nature of their health care systems or the fact that they're rural and people are dispersed—so it's harder to provide health care, more expensive—they have a tougher time controlling costs generally.

Again, the tax credits in the ACA will protect most consumers from the brunt of these premium increases. And with the ability to shop around on healthcare.gov, which works really well now—[*laughter*]—most people can find plans for prices even lower than this year's prices. But there are going to be people who are hurt by premium increases or a lack of competition and choice. And I don't want to see anybody left out without health insurance. I don't want to see any family having to choose between health insurance now or saving for retirement or saving for their kids' college education or just paying their own bills.

So the question we should be asking is, what do we do about these growing pains in the Affordable Care Act, and how do we get the last 9 percent of Americans covered? How do we reach those last 9 percent? And how do we make sure that premiums are more stable going forward and the marketplace insurance pools are more stable going forward?

Well, I can tell you what will not work: Repealing the Affordable Care Act will not work. That's a bad idea. That will not solve the problem, because right off the bat, repeal would take away health care from 20 million people. We'd go back where 80 percent of people had health insurance instead of 90 percent, right off the bat. And all the reforms that everybody benefits from that I talked about like young Americans being able to stay on their parents' plans or the rules that prevent insurance companies from discriminating against people because of a preexisting condition like diabetes or cancer or the rule now that you can't charge somebody more just because they're a woman—all those reforms would go away for everybody, because that's part of Obamacare.

All the progress that we've made in controlling costs and improving how health care is delivered, progress that's helped hold growth in the price of health care to the slowest rate in 50 years, all that goes away. That's what repeal

* White House correction.

means. It would be bad for everybody. And the majority of Americans, even if they don't know that they're benefiting from Obamacare, don't want to see these benefits and protections taken away from their families now that they have them. I guarantee you, there are people who right now think they hate Obamacare. And if somebody told them, all right, we're repealing it, but now your kid who is on your plan is no longer on your plan or now you've got a preexisting condition and you can't buy health insurance, they'd be shocked. They'd be, "What do you mean?" [*Laughter*]

So repeal is not the answer. Here is what we can do instead to actually make the Affordable Care Act work even better than it's working right now. And I've already mentioned one. Florida and every State should expand Medicaid. Cover more people. It's easy to do, and it could be done right now. You'd cover 4 million more Americans, help drive down premiums for folks who buy insurance through the marketplace. And by the way, because the Federal Government pays for almost all of this expansion, you can't use as an excuse that, "Well, the State can't afford it" because the Federal Government is paying it. States like Louisiana that just expanded Medicaid. You had a Republican Governor replaced by a Democratic Governor. He said, "I want that money." Expanded Medicaid and found not only does it insure more people, but it's actually saved the State big money and makes people less dependent on expensive emergency room care. So that's step number one.

Step number two: Since overall health care costs have turned out to be significantly lower than everyone expected since we passed Obamacare, since that's saved the Federal Government billions of dollars, we should use some of that money, some of those savings to now provide more tax credits for more middle-income families, for more young adults, to help them buy insurance. It will make their premiums more affordable. And that's not just good for them, it's good for everybody. Because when more people are in the marketplace, everybody will benefit from lower premiums. Healthier people, younger people start joining the pool, premiums generally go down. That'd be number two.

The third thing we should do is add what's called a public plan fallback to give folks more options in those places where there are just not enough insurers to compete. And that's especially important in some rural communities and rural States and counties. If you live in L.A. right now, then it's working fine. There are a lot of insurers because it's a big market. There are a lot of providers. But if you're in some remote areas or you're in some small towns, it may be that the economics of it just don't work unless the Government is providing an option to make it affordable. And by the way, this is not complicated. Basically, you would just wait and see. If the private insurers are competing for business, then you don't have to trigger a public option. But if no private insurers are providing affordable insurance in an area, then the Government would step in with a quality plan that people can afford.

And by the way, this is not a radical idea. This idea is modeled on something that Republicans championed under George Bush for the Medicare Part D drug benefit program. It was fine when it was their idea. [*Laughter*] The fact that they're now opposed to it as some socialist scheme is not being consistent. It's being partisan.

And finally, we should continue to encourage innovation by the States. What the Affordable Care Act says is, here's how we propose you insure your populations, but if you, the State, can figure out a different way to accomplish the same goal—providing affordable, comprehensive coverage for the same number of residents at the same costs—then go right ahead. There may be more than one way to skin a cat. Maybe you've got an idea we haven't thought of. Just show us, don't talk about it. Show us what the plan looks like.

Republicans who claim to care about your health insurance choices and your premiums, but then offer nothing and block common-sense solutions like the ones that I propose to improve them, that's not right. And my message to them has been and will continue to be:

Work with us. Make the system better. Help the people you serve. We're open to good ideas, but they've got to be real ideas, not just slogans—[*laughter*]—not just votes to repeal. And they've got to pass basic muster. You can't say, well, if we just do—if we just plant some magic beans—[*laughter*]—then everybody will have health insurance. No, we've got to have health care economists and experts look at it and see if the thing would actually work.

So that's where we are. Number one, Obamacare is helping millions of people right now. The uninsured rate has never been lower. It's helping everybody who already has health insurance because it makes their policies better. Number two, there are still too many hard-working people who are not being reached by the law. Number three, if we tweak the program to reach those people who are not currently benefiting from the law, it will be good for them, and it will be good for the country. Number four, if we repeal this law wholesale, that will hurt the people who don't have coverage right now. It will hurt the 20 million who are already getting help through the law, and it will help—it will hurt the country as a whole.

So this should be an easy choice. All it does—all it requires is putting aside ideology and, in good faith, trying to implement the law of the land. And what we've learned, by the way, is that when Governors and State legislatures expand Medicaid for their citizens and they hold insurance companies accountable, and they're honest with uninsured people about their options, and they're working with us on outreach, then the marketplace works the way it's supposed to. And when they don't, the marketplaces tend to have more problems. And that shouldn't be surprising. If State leaders purposely try to make something not work, then it's not going to run as smoothly as if they were trying to make it work. Common sense. You don't even have to go to Miami Dade to figure that out. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. Thank slick Rick. [*Laughter*]

The point is, now is not the time to move backwards on health care reform, now is the time to move forward. The problems that may have arisen from the Affordable Care Act is not because Government's too involved in the process. The problem is, is that we have not reached everybody and pulled them in. And think about it. When one of these companies comes out with a new smartphone and it had a few bugs, what do they do? They fix it. They upgrade it—unless it catches fire, and they just—[*laughter*]—then they pull it off the market. But you don't go back to using a rotary phone. [*Laughter*] You don't say, well, we're repealing smartphones. We're just going to do the dial-up thing. [*Laughter*] That's not what you do.

Well, the same basic principle applies here. We're not going to go back to discriminating against Americans with preexisting conditions. We're not going to go back to a time when people's coverage was dropped when they got sick. We're not going to go back to a situation where we're reinstating lifetime limits in the fine print so that you think you have insurance and then you get really sick or you kid gets really sick and you hit the limit that the insurance company set and, next thing you know, they're not covering you anymore and you've got to figure out how you come up with another $100,000 or $200,000 to make sure that your child lives. We're not going to go back to that.

I hear Republicans in Congress object, and they'll say, no, no, no, we'll keep those parts of Obamacare that are popular; we'll just repeal everything else. Well, it turns out that the sum of those parts that are popular in Obamacare is Obamacare. It's just, people don't always know it. And repealing it would make the majority of Americans worse off when it comes to health care.

And as I said, part of this is just, you know, health care is complicated. Think about this speech. It's been pretty long, and you're just—you're thinking, wow, I just want to take a picture with the President or something. [*Laughter*] So it's hard to get people focused on the facts. And even reporters who have covered this stuff—and they do a good job. They're trying to follow all the debate. But a lot of times they just report, "Premium increases." And everybody thinks, wow, my insurance rates are going up, it must be Obama's fault—[*laughter*]—even though you don't get

health insurance through Obamacare, you get it through your job and even though your increases have gone up a lot slower. Or suddenly, you're paying a bigger copay, and, ah, thanks Obama. [*Laughter*] And it's—well, no, I had nothing to do with that. [*Laughter*]

So part of it is, this is complicated the way it gets reported. There's a lot of hysteria around anything that happens. And what we need to do is just focus on this very specific problem: How do we make sure that more people are getting coverage? And folks right now who are not getting tax credits, aren't getting Medicaid, how do we help them? How do we reach them? And we can do it.

Instead of repealing the law, I believe the next President and the next Congress should take what we've learned over the past 6 years and in a serious way analyze it, figure out what it is that needs to get done, and make the Affordable Care Act better and cover even more people. But understand, no President can do it alone. We will need Republicans in Congress and in State governments to act responsibly and put politics aside, because I want to remind, you a lot of the Affordable Care Act is built on Republican ideas.

In fact, Bernie Sanders is still mad at me because we didn't get single-payer passed. Now, we couldn't get single-payer passed, and I wanted to make sure that we helped as many people as possible given the political constraints. And so we adopted a system that Republicans should like; it's based on a competitive, market-based system in which people have a responsibility for themselves to buy insurance.

And maybe now that I'm leaving office, maybe Republicans can stop with the 60-something repeal votes they've taken—[*laughter*]—and stop pretending that they have a serious alternative and stop pretending that all the terrible things they said would happen have actually happened when they have not and just work with the next President to smooth out the kinks.

Because it turns out, no major social innovation in America has ever worked perfectly at the start. Social Security didn't. Its benefits were stingy at first. It left out a whole lot of Americans. The same was true for Medicare. The same was true for Medicaid. The same was true for the prescription drug law. But what happened was, each year, people of good will from both parties tried to make it better. And that's what we need to do right now.

And I promise, if Republicans have good ideas to provide more coverage for folks like Amanda, I will be all for it. I don't care whose idea it is, I just want it to work. They can even change the name of the law to Reagan Care—[*laughter*]—or they can call it Paul Ryan Care. I don't care—[*laughter*]—about credit. I just want it to work because I care about the American people and making sure they've got health insurance. [*Laughter*]

But that brings me to my final point, and that is, change does not typically come from the top down, it always comes from the bottom up. The Affordable Care Act was passed because the American people mobilized, not just to get me elected, but to keep the pressure on me to actually do something about health care and to put pressure on Members of Congress to do something about it. And that's how change happens in America. It doesn't happen on its own. It doesn't happen from on high. It happens from the bottom up. And breaking gridlock will come only when the American people demand it.

So that's why I'm here. Only you can break this stalemate by educating the public on the benefits of the Affordable Care Act and then pressing your elected officials to do the right thing and supporting elected officials who have—are doing the right thing.

And this is one of the reasons why I'm so proud of what Miami Dade College is doing, because it's making sure that students and faculty and people throughout this community know about the law, know about how to sign up for health care, and then actually helps people sign up. And I'm incredibly proud of the leadership of Joe Peña and the entire team in encouraging people to sign up.

Thanks to them, Miami Dade has been hosting enrollment office hours and workshops, even on nights and weekends. Right here on

the Wolfson campus and on all the Miami Dade campuses, you can go for a free one-on-one session, where a trained expert can walk you through the process and answer any questions you have and then help you sign up for health care right there and then. Joe says he doesn't have a conversation without making sure people know how to get covered. The more young and healthy people like you who do the smart thing and sign up, then the better it's going to work for everybody.

And the good news is, in a few days, you can do just that because open enrollment, the time when you can start signing up, begins on November 1. And you just need to go to healthcare.gov, which works really well now. [*Laughter*]

And campuses will be competing to come up with the most creative ways to reach people and get them signed up. And I'm pretty sure that Miami Dade can set the standard for the rest of the country, because that's how you do. [*Applause*] That's how you do.

So much has changed since I campaigned here in Miami eight Octobers ago. But one thing has not: This is more than just about health care. It's about the character of our country. It's about whether we look out for one another. It's about whether the wealthiest nation on Earth is going to make sure that nobody suffers, nobody loses everything they've saved, everything they've worked for because they're sick. You stood up for the idea that no American should have to go without the health care they need.

And it's still true today. And we've proven together that people who love this country can change it. Twenty million people out there will testify. I get letters every day just saying thank you because it's made a difference in their lives. And what was true then is true now. We still need you. Our work to expand opportunity to all and to make our Union more perfect is never finished, but the more we work and organize and advocate and fight, the closer we get.

So I hope you're going to be busy this November signing folks up. But more importantly, I hope for all the young people here, you never stop working for a better America. And even though I won't be President, I'll keep working right alongside you.

Thank you, everybody. God bless you. God bless America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:51 p.m. in the Conference Center at Miami Dade College, Wolfson Campus. In his remarks, he referred to Stacey and Caleb Lihn, parents of Phoenix, AZ, resident Zoe Lihn; Gov. Richard L. Scott of Florida; former Gov. Piyush "Bobby" Jindal and Gov. John Bel Edwards of Louisiana; former President George W. Bush; and Joe Peña, director of Federal relations, Miami Dade College.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in Miami Gardens, Florida
October 20, 2016

The President. Hello, Miami Gardens! How's everybody doing today? Can everybody please give a big round of applause to Dominique? We are so proud of her. Thank you, Florida Memorial University. Go Lions! It's good to be here.

Audience member. We love you, Obama!

The President. Love you back. Well, I love you back, you know that. You know who else I love? We've got a bunch of elected officials here today, including some of your outstanding Representatives: Frederica Wilson is in the house; and your next United States Senator, Patrick Murphy.

So, if you have a seat, feel free to sit down. If you don't have a seat, don't. Just make yourself comfortable, because I've got some things to say here.

So this will be probably one of my last visits to Miami as President.

Audience members. No!

The President. No, no, don't worry. Don't worry. I'm going to come back, but I won't be

President, so I can have more fun. But this is how things work in a democracy. I'll talk about that later too: how things are supposed to work in a democracy. Michelle and I only get an 8-year lease on the White House. We rent, we don't own. And right now we're making sure we haven't broken anything; that Bo and Sunny haven't ruined any carpets. [*Laughter*] We have been marking off how tall Malia and Sasha were getting on the wall, but now we've got to erase it. [*Laughter*] Because we want our security deposit back. But obviously, it has been one of the great honors of my life—the great honor of my life—to serve the American people.

And look, the truth is, I couldn't have done it without Florida. Florida has always been good to us. I remember campaigning here in Miami in the closing days of a tough campaign 8 years ago. And we had been living through two long wars. We were about to enter into the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes. On issues like health care and issues like climate change, we hadn't really been doing anything. We had just been kicking the can down the road. And I told you then, when I was campaigning, I told you I wasn't a perfect man and I wasn't going to be a perfect President. But I told you I would work as hard as I could every single day on your behalf; that I would fight for you to make life a little bit easier for working families all across this country.

And I tell you what, 8 years later, we can look back, and we can say we fought our way back from a recession. Our businesses have turned job losses into 15 million new jobs. We have slashed our dependence on foreign oil. We've doubled our production of clean energy. Incomes are rising; poverty is falling. The uninsured rate is at an alltime low. We've brought our brave troops home to their families. We delivered justice to Usama bin Laden. Marriage equality is a reality in all 50 States. We've been busy these last 8 years.

By every measure, our country is stronger and more prosperous than when I came into office. But all that progress is at stake if we don't do the right thing these next 19 days.

I know there are some folks who are talking about how terrible America is. But you know what, I've been to all 50 States as your President, and I see how great America is right now. I see folks working hard, starting their own businesses. I see teachers reaching into their own pocket to make sure our kids are getting the education that they need. I see doctors serving the poor and coming up with new cures. I see our men and women in uniform, our cops and first responders, running towards danger, working to keep us safe.

I see the patriotism of young activists who are troubled when things don't go the way they should and call on us to live up to our highest ideals. I see all of you—Americans of every faith and every race and every region of the country—who know that we're stronger together. Young and old, men and women, Black, White, Latino, Asian, Native American, people with disabilities or not—all pledging allegiance to the Red and White and Blue. That's what I see about America. That's the America I know.

That is the America I know. And there is only one candidate in this race who has devoted her life to that better America: the next President of the United States, Hillary Clinton!

Now—[*applause*]. Hold on, hold on, hold on. See, that's one of the things I love about Florida: This is always a rowdy crowd. Here's the good news. You don't have to wait until November 8 to send Hillary to the White House. You don't need to wait until November 8 to send Patrick Murphy to the United States Senate. You can vote early starting this Monday.

You can find out where to vote at iwillvote.com. Starting on Monday, you can go to the polls. And when you vote early, it's not crowded. When you vote early, there are no lines. When you vote early, you can, kind of, do it on your lunch break. You can do it at your own leisure. You can take your time.

But starting Monday, you can reject somebody who proves himself unfit to be President every single day in every single way. You can reject his dark, pessimistic, fearmongering vi-

sion of a country, where we turn against each other and turn away from our role in the world.

And instead, you can choose as qualified a person who has ever run to lead this country. You can affirm the America we know, a country full of optimism and courage and generosity and hope; a country where we look out for each other and don't turn on each other. That's the choice that you can make, starting on Monday, right here in South Florida.

Now, I've said this before. There's nothing that can completely prepare you for the job of being President of the United States. You know, that first day after you get sworn in, and they walk you in the office, then everybody leaves, and you're in the office, and you're looking around thinking, man, now what? [*Laughter*]

But here's the thing. Hillary Clinton, she's been a First Lady. She's been a Senator. She's been my Secretary of State. She's been in the room when tough decisions were made. She knows how those decisions can affect a veteran or a soldier or a kid who needs a great education or a worker who is fighting for a good job or a raise or a decent retirement. And I will tell you, even in the middle of crisis, she is calm and cool and collected. And she's listening to people, and she's treating everybody with respect.

And here's the thing about Hillary: No matter how tough the odds, no matter how much people try to knock her down, no matter how mean folks can be, she doesn't point fingers. She doesn't complain. She doesn't whine. [*Laughter*] She just works harder, and she gets the job done. And she never, ever, ever quits. And that's why I know she can be a great President of the United States of America.

And the other thing is, she actually knows what she's talking about. [*Laughter*] She's actually done her homework. So she's got real plans to address what she's heard from you: specific ideas to invest in new jobs, to help workers share in company's profits, to reduce inequality; ideas to help kids have access to preschool and help students go through college without taking on a ton of debt. She was just here in Miami last week talking about what she was going to do to fight climate change. And then she proposed a child tax credit that would help millions of families.

I mean, she loves this stuff. She's all—she's just reading her briefing book all the time. She's not watching TV. She's not watching the reality TV. She's not participating in reality TV. She's doing the work, and that's what you want from a President of the United States of America.

Now, she is not going to be able to do it alone. So we also have to have outstanding Members of Congress. And Patrick Murphy, when he's your United States Senator, he's going to be doing his work. In fact, unlike his opponent, he actually shows up to work. Unlike his opponent, he didn't try to defund Planned Parenthood. He made sure that women could make their own health care decisions.

Unlike his opponent, he didn't walk away from Florida's Hispanic community when the politics got tough. He fought for comprehensive immigration reform and a pathway to citizenship. Unlike his opponent, Patrick actually believes in science and believes in the effects of climate change. Just the other night in their debate, Marco Rubio did not accept that sea levels are rising. And if you're watching TV or you are going down some of the blocks right here in Miami in the middle of a sunny day and you see the ocean coming up through the streets, how can you deny what is right in front of you? I thought he was from Miami.

Patrick Murphy brought Democrats and Republicans together to fund Everglades restoration. He knows how to get stuff done, not just think about what you're going to do next. And as your next Senator, he'll fight for this planet for future generations.

The point is, you deserve leaders who show up to work, who do their homework, to—who care more about you than just hanging on to their job, who will have your back. That is who Hillary Clinton is. That's who Patrick Murphy is. They will always be there for you. And that's why you've got to be there for them, starting Monday when you go early vote.

And in contrast, you've got Donald Trump.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Oh! Don't boo, vote! Vote! Booing doesn't do any good. [*Laughter*] Vote! And get your friends to vote. Get Uncle Joe to vote. Get Pookie to vote and Javier to vote. Vote, don't boo. Trump can't hear you from here. But he can hear you when you go to the ballot box and vote.

I know Trump hangs around here in Florida, but I don't think he represents the values of Florida.

Audience members. No!

The President. Here's a guy who repeatedly stiffs small-business owners and workers who have done work for him. In fact, he thinks that's smart; just don't pay them and then let them try to sue. This is a guy who doesn't release his tax returns. First President—first Presidential candidate in decades who won't release his tax returns. And it's either because he's not as rich as he says he is, or—as he admits—he hadn't paid federal income taxes in years. And he says that's smart. He thinks you're suckers for doing what you're supposed to do.

But it's not smart not to pay your taxes. All that means is, unlike the rest of us, despite everything that America has given to him, he doesn't feel obliged to give back a single dime to help our troops or our veterans or to make sure that young people get help going to college.

He keeps on talking about wanting to make America great. Well, it's people who avoid their responsibilities that create problems here in America. He's not part of the solution, he's part of the problem.

And if you really believe that a guy who's spent 70 years on this Earth, showing no regard for working people, is suddenly going to be the champion of working people, then I guess that's your guy. But if you want leaders who actually value hard work, respect working Americans, who want higher wages and better benefits and a fairer Tax Code, who want equal pay for equal work for women, then you should vote for Hillary Clinton, and you should vote for Patrick Murphy.

And if you want somebody who is going to actually keep your family safe in a dangerous world, then the choice is even clearer. Hillary will see to it that our troops finish the job of defeating ISIL. They are going after them right now as we speak. And she'll do it without resorting to torture or banning religions from our country. She's already got the temperament and the knowledge, the steady hand to be the next Commander in Chief.

And meanwhile, you've got Donald Trump insulting POWs; attacking a Gold Star mom, and talking down our troops and our veterans; praising dictators; telling our allies we might stand—we might not stand by them if they don't pay up.

I agree with the U.S. Senator—a Republican—who, a while back, said that we can't afford to give "the nuclear codes of the United States to an erratic individual."

By the way, you know who said that? Marco Rubio. He also called Donald Trump a "dangerous con artist" "who has spent a career sticking it to working people."

Audience member. Say it again!

The President. You want me to say it again? He said—[*laughter*]—Marco Rubio said, this was a "dangerous con artist" who spent a lifetime—"spent a career sticking it to working people."

Now, that begs the question, since we're in Florida: Why does Marco Rubio still plan to vote for Donald Trump? Why is he supporting Donald Trump?

Audience members. Why!

The President. I mean, we know—look, I know a lot of Republicans, voters, just ordinary folks, your neighbors, your friends—most of them don't think the way Trump does. And there are legitimate differences between the parties. But there has to be a point where you stand for something more than just party or more for—than just your own career.

And here's the thing. Trump didn't come out of nowhere now. For years, Republican politicians and far-right media outlets had just been pumping out all kinds of toxic, crazy stuff. I mean, first of all, there was the whole birther thing. Then they start saying climate change is a Chinese hoax. And according to them, I'm power enough to cause these hurricanes—

[*laughter*]—and I'm about to steal everybody's guns in the middle of the night and declare martial law, but somehow, I still need a teleprompter to finish a sentence. [*Laughter*]

So they have been saying crazy stuff. And there were a lot of politicians, like Marco Rubio, who know better. But they just look the other way, because they figured, you know what, if they really—if we can stir folks up and think that Barack or Hillary or others are doing all these terrible things we're saying they're doing, that's going to help us get votes. And so we'll just oppose anything that they're trying to do, and maybe we'll end up having more power in Washington. And so they just stood by and said nothing—even though they knew better—while their base actually started believing some of this stuff.

I say all this because Donald Trump didn't start all this. Like he usually does, he just slapped his name on it, took credit for it, and then promoted the heck out of it.

Now, over the last couple of weeks, after those videos came out on that bus, there were a number of Republican politicians who walked away from Donald Trump. Apparently, a tape where a Presidential candidate brags about actions that, if you hear what he's saying, qualify as sexual assault—apparently, that was the deal breaker for them. Or at least, his poll numbers dropping after the tape came out was the deal breaker for them. I mean, last night, did you hear, Trump tried to run away comments that are on a recording, and the audience started laughing when he said, "I really respect women." [*Laughter*] Did you see that?

But here is my question. My question is, why would it take this long——

Audience members. Right!

The President. ——for Republican Senators and Republican Congressmen and Republican Governors and State reps and State senators—why would it take you this long to figure out that Donald Trump shouldn't be President?

If you've made a career of idolizing Ronald Reagan, then where were you when your party's nominee for President was kissing up to Vladimir Putin, the former KGB officer? I—you used to criticize me for even talking to the Russians. Now, suddenly, you're okay with your nominee having a bromance with Putin. [*Laughter*]

If you come from a family of immigrants—like almost everybody here does unless you're Native American—where were you when your party's nominee for President called immigrants "criminals" and "rapists"?

If you say you love the Constitution—in fact, you say Obama is overreaching with his executive actions, he's violating the Constitution, should be impeached—but then you stand up and nominate and support a guy who says that he would silence reporters, jail his political opponent in the middle of a debate, deport whoever he wants. I mean, I assume you've got some familiarity with the 1st Amendment and the 5th Amendment and the 14th Amendment. Why weren't you offering him your pocket Constitution, like Mr. Khan did?

If you're a Republican official or leader out there, and you've run for office on family values—family values—why wouldn't you walk away from him months ago when you heard your nominee for President call women "pigs" and "dogs" and "slobs," and grade them not for their character or their intellect, but on a scale of 1 to 10?

You don't have to be a husband or father to stand up for women. You don't have to have a disability to say it's wrong to mock somebody with a disability. You don't have to be a Muslim to stand up for our fellow citizens who are just as patriotic as we are. You just have to be a decent person, and you just have to love this country.

So I don't give a lot of credit for folks who are just now trying to walk away from trouble. Although, I will say I'm even more confused by Republican politicians who still support Donald Trump. Marco Rubio is one of those people. How does that work? How can you call him a con artist and dangerous and object to all the controversial things he says and then say, but I'm still going to vote for him? Come on, man. [*Applause*] Come on, man. That—[*laughter*].

You know what that is though? It is the height of cynicism. That's a sign of somebody who will say anything, do anything, pretend to be anybody, just to get elected. And you know

what? If you're willing to be anybody just to be somebody, then you don't have the leadership that Florida needs in the United States Senate. That's not the leadership you need. That's why you've got to vote for Patrick Murphy. That's why you've got to vote for Hillary Clinton.

That's why you've got to start voting early on Monday and go to iwillvote.com. Because, let me tell you, there's only one way we lose this election—just one—if we don't turn out to vote. Only way.

We've got to do it big. We've got to leave no doubt. Because you notice, the Donald is already whining that the vote is going to be rigged before the game is even over. We have—we're just starting to vote now. He's already, like, oh, the game is rigged. [*Laughter*] Except today, he said, of course, it's not rigged if I win. [*Laughter*]

I mean, this—and by the way, I will say all the Republicans have—not all, but most, have acknowledged there's no way to rig an election in a country this big. I don't know if Donald Trump has ever been to an actual polling place where you have Democrats and Republicans who are in charge of taking the votes. But he doesn't even worry if what he says is true. This is just about him worried that he's losing, which means, he really doesn't have what it takes to hold this job.

Because, I will tell you, there's a lot of time in this job where things don't go your way. And when you suggest—but I've made this point before; I want to repeat it here—this is more than just the usual standard lie. Because when you suggest rigging or fraud, without a shred of evidence, when last night at the debate, Trump becomes the first major-party nominee in American history to suggest that he will not concede, despite losing the vote, and then says today that he will accept the results if he wins, that is not a joking matter.

Audience members. No!

The President. No, no, no, I want everybody to pay attention here. That is dangerous. Because when you try to sow the seeds of doubt in people's minds about the legitimacy of our elections, that undermines our democracy. Then you're doing the work of our adversaries for them. Because our democracy depends on people knowing that their vote matters; that those who occupy the seats of power were chosen by the people. Even when your preferred candidate loses, even when you are the one who is running and you lose, you've got to see the bigger picture and say that here in America, we believe in democracy and we accept the will of the people.

So I'm telling you, Florida, your vote does matter. Your votes does count. And this whole notion of voter fraud, listen, one study shows that out of 1 billion votes cast, there were exactly—there were 31 proven cases of voter fraud—31 out of 1 billion. You are luckier—you are much likelier to get struck by lightning—[*laughter*]—than to have somebody next to you commit voter fraud. You'd win the Powerball. [*Laughter*]

And so that's why I am glad to see Republicans coming out and saying that kind of talk is nonsense. I mean, after all, in Florida here, you've got a Republican Governor.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Well, don't boo!

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Booing gets you nowhere.

You got Republican Governors in battleground States like Ohio and North Carolina and Georgia and Nevada and Iowa, in Texas and Arizona. Are they all in on this rigging? They're not going to rig the election for Hillary Clinton.

Even Marco Rubio says there's no rigging of the vote, which I'd like to give him credit for, except he's refuting the dangerous and unprecedented claims of a candidate he says he's still going to vote for, which just gives you one more bit of proof that Marco seems to just care about hanging on to his job.

Patrick Murphy cares about you. Listen, I've lost an election before. It is no fun. Winning is better. But when you lose, you congratulate your opponent. And you look inside yourself, and you figure out, what did I do wrong? And then you work harder, and you try to win the next time. That's how democracy works. That's what real leaders do.

Democracy is a challenge, and it's supposed to be. But you can't just look out for yourself and look out for your own best interests. You've got to look out for America's best interests, not just when it's easy, but when it's hard.

And that's what Patrick Murphy understands. That's what Hillary Clinton has done her entire life. She knows that in this big, diverse country, democracy can't work if all we're about is trying to destroy somebody in the other party, if we demonize each other. If we block Supreme Court appointments, not because that's how it's supposed to work, but just because we didn't win. She knows that issues aren't black or white, that progress requires compromise. Even when you are a hundred-percent right, you've still got to compromise in a country like this. She knows that nobody is perfect. But at least we should all try to conduct ourselves with the same decency and generosity and big heartedness that we try to teach our own kids.

And you know what, that kind of steadiness, that kind of responsibility, that attitude of just doing the right thing, it doesn't always grab headlines. Our politics can't always just be boiled down to a tweet. [*Laughter*] And I know in this election season, sometimes, politics seem cheap and trivial and frustrating. But right now I am here to tell you, you've got a chance to reject that kind of politics. You can reject divisive politics. You can reject mean-spirited politics. You don't have to let this country go backwards. You have a chance to move it forward and elect a woman the first female President, who has spent her entire life trying to make this country better.

Somebody who has worked hard even when she's fallen short. Somebody who works hard even when she's attacked; that's got guts; that's got courage.

So don't fall for the easy cynicism that says your vote doesn't matter. Don't believe that notion that all politicians are the same. That's what Hillary's opponent wants you to think so you lose faith, so you give up, so you stay home. I—don't do that. Because I promise you your vote does matter.

And if you have any doubt, ask the 20 million people who have got health care today that didn't have it before you voted. Ask the marine who can serve this country without hiding the husband that he loves. Ask him if your vote matters. Ask the autoworker who saw his factory go dark, but now is working a double shift. Find out from him if your vote matters.

I just came from Miami Dade College. And they've got students from about a hundred different countries. Ask all those young immigrants, those DACA kids who have earned an opportunity to stay and study and become doctors and lawyers—young people just like Dominique, just as talented as Malia and Sasha, who now have a chance to contribute to this country that they love just as much as anybody—ask them if your vote matters. They know it does.

Donald Trump has nothing to offer but anger and grievance and blame. And so he asks—his closing argument asks: What do you have to lose? Well, I'm here to tell you: everything. You know how much progress we've made, despite the opposition, despite the forces of discrimination, despite the politics of backlash. And that progress doesn't stop with my Presidency. We're just getting started.

So progress is on the ballot. Civility is on the ballot. Tolerance is on the ballot. Justice is on the ballot. Equality is on the ballot. Our democracy is on the ballot.

Hillary Clinton will advance those things. Donald Trump wants to reverse progress. Marco Rubio wants to help him. You want to give me a good send-off, you want to give Michelle a good send-off? Join us. Work as hard for Hillary and Patrick as you did for us. You care about our democracy, don't stay home. You've got to get in the arena. You've got to vote.

That's what this democracy is about. It's not a spectator sport. You want to give me a good send-off, go knock on some doors, sign up as a volunteer, make some phone calls, go talk to your friends. And if you do that, we'll win this election.

We'll elect Patrick Murphy your next Senator. We'll elect Hillary Clinton the next President. We'll show our kids and the rest of the

world why America remains the greatest nation in the world.

Thank you, Miami. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:12 p.m. in the Athletic and Wellness Center at Florida Memorial University. In his remarks, he referred to Dominique Nicholson, student, Florida Memorial University, who introduced the President; Ghazala and Khizr Khan, parents of Capt. Humayun Khan, USA, who was killed in Iraq on June 8, 2004; New York Times reporter Serge F. Kovaleski, who suffers from arthrogryposis, a condition which limits the functioning of his joints; President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; Gov. Richard L. Scott of Florida; Gov. John R. Kasich of Ohio; Gov. Patrick L. McCrory of North Carolina; Gov. Nathan J. Deal of Georgia; Gov. Brian E. Sandoval of Nevada; Gov. Terry E. Branstad of Iowa; Gov. Gregory W. Abbott of Texas; and Gov. Douglas Ducey of Arizona. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Former National Aeronautics and Space Administration Astronauts Commander Scott J. Kelly and Captain Mark E. Kelly and an Exchange With Reporters

October 21, 2016

The President. Well, this is a treat for me, at the end of a long week, to be able to visit with a couple of friends, but also, I believe, American heroes. In particular, I want to say thank you, on behalf of the American people, to Scott Kelly.

As some of you know, a while back, Scott completed what was the longest period of time that any U.S. astronaut has ever spent in space: almost a year. And what made this so important was not just to break a record, it gave us an opportunity to learn how Scott, as an astronaut, is impacted by lengthy stays like that. And we've got somebody to compare him to: his twin brother Mark, also an astronaut. [*Laughter*]

So, as a consequence, what we were able to learn is how does the body adapt, what kinds of physiological impacts; psychologically, from what I understand from Scott, he was pretty good. But all this allows us to start thinking about long-term, manned space flight.

And as I announced recently, our goal—our next goal—not our ultimate goal, but our next goal is to get to Mars. And obviously, we've got a lot of work to do technologically to figure out how to get there, what kinds of spacecrafts allow us to do that most effectively. But if we're going to do a manned flight, then one of the keys is making sure that our astronauts who are going out into space for that long period of time are also then able to come back: what kinds of environments do we need to create for them, what are the biological sciences and other elements that will allow for a successful mission?

So we are extraordinarily grateful to Scott for the sacrifices that he's made. He did all kinds of science experimenting up there that is over my head and I won't even try to explain, but the data, the knowledge that we've accumulated from his incredible adventure is something that is going to serve us in good stead as we continue to accelerate and advance our forays into space.

As everybody knows, I'm a big space fan, and Charles Bolden, another ex-astronaut, along with my chief science adviser, John Holdren, have been working closely with me to maximize the investments that we make, to try to encourage Congress to work with us so that that final frontier is something that continues to inspire, continues to motivate the imaginations of young people, and creates enormous spillover effects, because when we learn about space, we're also learning about ourselves, and ultimately, we're learning about technologies that can make a difference in terms of our day-to-day lives.

One last point I'd make is, Scott was sharing with me what the planet looks like from up above and how much of a perspective it gives on the need for us to preserve this planet. And so I'm going to have just a couple more remarks, but I thought this would maybe be a good time, Scott, for you just to share with everybody else what you just shared with me in terms of what it means when you're seeing day in and day out our planet Earth.

Cmdr. Kelly. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, sir, for having us here today, and thanks for supporting NASA in your new initiative for us to start really thinking hard about going to Mars. I think that's our next very worthy goal in space.

And what the President is referring to is, being in space for a whole year, you get this perspective of seeing the Earth through changing seasons and different lighting conditions. And when I was in space for shorter periods of time, I would often think, well, maybe the Earth is just looking like that because it's a weather pattern or it's not how it always appears throughout the year.

But seeing places like China and India and the pollution that exists there almost all the time is quite shocking. And there was one day last summer, the summer of 2015, when I was in space, I saw the eastern side of China, and it was perfectly clear. And I'd never seen that before in my—in all of my time in space, and I'd spent well over a year in space, total, at that point. And I could see all these cities that are—there's, like, over 200 cities in that part of China, with over a million people. And it was at dusk, and I could just, for the very first time, I was able to see them, and it was quite shocking.

I didn't really understand it until the next day I heard that the Chinese Government had turned off a lot of the coal-producing power plants, stopped the cars from running in that part of the country for this national holiday, and the sky had completely cleared.

So it's interesting to see just how much of a negative impact we have on the environment, but also how quickly we can have a positive impact on it if we decide to do something—not to mention the atmosphere is very, very thin and scary looking when you see it from space.

The President. It's a good reminder that we need to do everything we can to preserve this place we call home.

Because of people like Scott and Mark, we are continuing to see young people inspired to get into science, math, engineering, technology: what we call STEM. As many of you know, we've been really trying to emphasis STEM education, including hosting a White House Science Fair so that the incredible achievements of our best young minds are celebrated.

At the last one, a 9-year-old budding scientist said to me, you need a kids' science advisory group so that you're getting our perspective about what's interesting to us and how you should be thinking about teaching science and getting kids excited about science. And then, I thought, that's why you're smarter than me. [*Laughter*]

So we, in fact, have formed a science advisory group, which is meeting as we speak. After we finish here, we're going to go and talk to them, because I suspect that there are going to be some of those young people in the Roosevelt Room who are going to be the ones to figure out how we not just get to Mars, but colonize Mars and go beyond. They're the ones who are going to figuring out these technologies. But they will be building off the incredible work of people like Scott Kelly and Mark Kelly.

And my last point, I want to say thank you to Mark Kelly. With his wife Gabby Giffords, they have been doing incredible work around making sure that, in addition to taking care of the planet and understanding our environment, that we're also thinking smartly about gun safety and the preventable deaths that bring so much tragedy and hardship to so many people's lives.

My understanding is, Gabby right now is on a 42-day bus trip.

Capt. Kelly. Forty-two day, 42 cities.

The President. Forty-two days and 42 cities——

Capt. Kelly. Bus trip.

The President. ——bus trip, and just talking about the importance of us getting together in

a bipartisan way to do something about gun safety.

Capt. Kelly. Yes, sir.

The President. And so, in addition to doing cool stuff in space, they're also helping us think smartly about how to make our country better on a day-to-day basis. So we're so glad she's doing well. We want to thank both of them.

At some other time, if you haven't already heard, you should get some stories from Scott about what it's like after you've been in space for almost a year, and then you come down and you're walking around. My understanding is that his head got a little larger—[*laughter*].

Capt. Kelly. A lot larger.

The President. ——measurably so. And we don't just mean ego. [*Laughter*] But apparently, it's back to normal size. I wanted to see him right away, but folks thought it might be a little scary. [*Laughter*]

So, all right? Thank you, guys.

Mark Twain Prize for American Humor Recipient Actor Bill Murray

Q. Mr. President. Did you meet with Bill Murray?

The President. Absolutely. He was wearing a Cubs jacket which, for a White Sox fan, is a little troubling. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, guys. Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:25 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Jacob Leggette, student, Digital Harbor Foundation's Mini Makers program; and former Rep. Gabrielle D. Giffords.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Democratic Republic of the Congo
October 21, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to the situation in or in relation to the Democratic Republic of the Congo declared in Executive Order 13413 of October 27, 2006, is to continue in effect beyond October 27, 2016.

The situation in or in relation to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has been marked by widespread violence and atrocities that continue to threaten regional stability, continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13413 with respect to the situation in or in relation to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at BET's "Love and Happiness: A Musical Experience"
October 21, 2016

The President. Hello, hello, hello! Thank you. Thank you so much. Everybody, have a seat. Well, you can tell what kind of night this is. That was not the usual ruffles and flourishes. [*Laughter*] That was not John Philip Sousa right there. [*Laughter*] This must be a BET event.

So hello, everybody!

Audience members. Hello!

The President. Welcome to the White House.

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you back. That's why we're having this concert. [*Laughter*]

So, over the past 8 years, Michelle and I have set aside nights like this to honor and celebrate the music that has shaped America. We've had classical. We've had country. We've had blues. We've had Broadway, gospel, Motown, Latin, and jazz. We've had Bob Dylan, and we've had Jennifer Hudson; Gloria Estefan and Los Lobos; Aretha, Patti, Smokey—it's true. I've had Paul McCartney singing "Michelle" to Michelle. [*Laughter*] And Stevie singing "Happy Birthday." We've had Buddy Guy and Mick Jagger getting me to sing "Sweet Home Chicago" one night, a little off key. [*Laughter*]

So this has become one of our favorite traditions. And it's with a little bit of bittersweetness that this is our final musical evening as President and First Lady.

Audience members. Aww!

The President. I know. [*Laughter*] It's going to be all right. [*Laughter*] Going to be all right.

And I want to thank BET for helping us out tonight to throw a great party.

So this evening, instead of focusing on a particular theme or genre, we decided to just invite some outstanding artists to help us celebrate. And I will be honest, this is one of the perks of the job that we'll miss most, along with Air Force One. [*Laughter*] And Marine One. [*Laughter*] But if you can just call up Usher and say, "Hey, come on over to my house and sing with us"—[*laughter*]—or call up Janelle Monáe and say, "You know what, we need a little extra something here, can you"—[*laughter*]—it doesn't get any better than that.

Although I do want to make one thing clear. This event may be called "Love and Happiness," but, much to, I know, your sadness or regret, I will not be singing Al Green this evening. [*Laughter*] Won't do it. [*Laughter*]

Now, it's no secret that Michelle and I love music, and we tried to share our passion with the rest of the country. But it is important to note we are not the first occupants of this house to fill it with music. Ever since 1801, when the U.S. Marine Band played the first reception hosted by John and Abigail Adams, live performances have always been a part of life at the White House. And by the way, another perk that I will really miss: our amazing Marine Band. They are—[*applause*]. Not only can they play anything, and I mean anything—I've seen them play with Yo-Yo Ma and then jam with B.B. King—but they're also Active Duty. So they are not just astounding musicians, but they're also protecting this country. And Michelle and I just love them. We cannot thank them enough for their outstanding work.

Anyway, you might walk around the White House and see the fancy chandeliers and the paintings of George and Martha, and you may think that the musical performances before we got here were a little stuffy. Now, it's true they weren't quite like our musical events. [*Laughter*] But the truth is that throughout history, the White House has celebrated the new and the innovative. It's even been a little edgy once in a while.

President Chester A. Arthur was ahead of his time in inviting the all-Black Fisk Jubilee Singers, and their performance moved him to tears. Teddy Roosevelt welcomed Scott Joplin, because his daughter wanted to hear "that new jazz." And then guests of the Kennedys apparently did the twist in the East Room, which may not sound like a big deal to you, but that was sort of the twerking of their time. [*Laughter*] It was bold. [*Laughter*] There will also be no twerking tonight—[*laughter*]—at least not by me. [*Laughter*] I don't know about Usher. [*Laughter*]

But it makes sense because this is the people's house, and it ought to reflect the amazing diversity, and the imagination, and the incredible ingenuity that defines the American people. And while much of the music that you will hear this evening—gospel, R&B, rap—is rooted in the African American experience, it's not just Black music. This is an essential part of the American experience. It's a mirror to who we are and a reminder of who we can be.

That's what American music is all about. And generations from now, I hope it's the story that the White House will continue to tell.

So, with that, I'm going to stop talking. Are you ready to get started?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. If so, give it up for our first performer, the amazing, the lovely Jill Scott!

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 7:50 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to musicians Aretha Franklin, Patti LaBelle, William "Smokey" Robinson, Stevie Wonder, and Usher T. Raymond IV.

The President's Weekly Address
October 22, 2016

Hi, everybody. I'm going to be honest with you: One of the best parts of being President is having your own really nice plane. And I'm going to miss it a lot, because up until I ran for this office, I was mostly flying coach. So I know what a pain the whole process can be, from searching for the best prices to that feeling you get when the baggage carousel stops and yours still hasn't come out.

Now, our airlines employ a lot of hard-working folks—from pilots and flight attendants to ticket agents and baggage handlers—all who take pride in getting us to our destinations safely, and on time. They do good work, and we're proud of them. But I think we all know that the system can work a little better for everybody.

That's why, over the last 8 years, my administration has taken some commonsense steps to do just that. We've put in place rules that virtually eliminated excessive delays on the tarmac. We've required airlines to grant travelers more flexibility on cancellations, to provide refunds to anyone who cancels within 24 hours of purchase, and to give you better compensation if you got bumped off your flight because it was oversold.

And this week, I was proud to build on that progress with even more actions to save you money, create more competition in the marketplace, and make sure that you're getting what you pay for. First, we're proposing refunds for anyone whose bag is delayed, because you should not have to pay extra for a service you don't even receive. Second, we're requiring airlines to report more information on things like how likely it is that you'll lose your luggage or reach your destination on time. Third, we're providing more protections for travelers with disabilities. And finally, we're ramping up transparency requirements for online ticket platforms so sites can't privilege one airline over another without you knowing about it.

All of this should help you make better decisions for yourselves and your families and, hopefully, avoid a few headaches too. It's another example of how Government can be a force of good: standing up for consumers, ensuring businesses compete fairly to give you the best services at the best prices, and making sure everyday Americans have a voice in the conversation, not just corporate shareholders. That's what this is all about: taking steps, some big and some small, that can make your life a little bit better.

Thanks, everybody. Have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 2:05 p.m. on October 21 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on October 22. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 21, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on October 22. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks to an Overflow Crowd at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton and Democratic Senatorial Candidate Catherine Cortez Masto in North Las Vegas, Nevada
October 23, 2016

The President. Hello, Las Vegas! How is everybody doing? Good? So I'm sorry that it's a little crowded up in there. But I just wanted to let you guys know how much I appreciate you. I would not be President if it weren't for all the work that so many of you did back in 2008, back in 2012.

But if we're going to continue all the progress that we've made, then we are going to have to make sure that we vote this time out. So I need everybody here to not just vote yourselves, but you've got to get your friends, your neighbors, your cousins. If you're not 18 and you can't vote, make sure your parents vote and your cousins vote. Because that's the only way we're going to be able to continue the progress that we've made.

If you care about putting people back to work, then you want Hillary Clinton as President of the United States. If you want to make sure that immigration reform gets passed, we've got to have Catherine Cortez Masto in the United States Senate. If you want to make sure that we continue to make progress on education and making college affordable, then we've got to have more Democratic Members of Congress in the House of Representatives.

So we've got 2 weeks. I need you to work as hard as you can. You know the stakes. We can't afford the other guy.

Audience members. No!

The President. Can't do that. I'd feel really bad. [*Laughter*] So this is no joke. Do not take anything for granted. I need you all to get out there. If you do, then I know that we're going to continue to build on the progress we've made the last 8 years and nobody is going to be able to stop the United States of America from making sure that every child in America is able to fulfill its dreams.

I love you. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:33 p.m. in the courtyard at Cheyenne High School. In his remarks, he referred to Republican Presidential nominee Donald J. Trump. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton and Democratic Senatorial Candidate Catherine Cortez Masto in North Las Vegas
October 23, 2016

The President. Hello, Nevada! Hello, Cheyenne High School! Oh, it is good to be back in Nevada! I heard the other guy was trying to tell you how to say Nevada. You remember that?

Audience members. Yes!

Audience member. Four more years!

The President. Can't do it. [*Laughter*] I am so glad to be back here; I've got so many good friends. I am so blessed to be here. I'm glad to be back at this outstanding high school. Thank you for hosting us. I've got some really, really good friends here, folks who supported me when nobody could pronounce my name. [*Laughter*] But some of my friends everybody here knows because they've been friends to everybody in Nevada. And so I want to just make sure to give them a shout-out. First——

Audience member. I love you!

The President. I love you back.

But first and foremost, somebody who has been not just an outstanding elected official, but he has been my friend. I could not have gotten done any of the things I got done had it not been for him getting my back every step of the way. I love this guy. He has always stood up for Nevada first. He's stood up for working

people. He's never forgotten where he came from. Give it up for your Senator, Harry Reid. I love Harry Reid. Love—I love his wife Landra more, because she's even more loveable. [*Laughter*]

I also want to make sure that you are turning out to make sure that we get a couple of outstanding members back in the House of Representatives. Jacky Rosen and Ruben Kihuen. And along with electing those two outstanding officials to Congress, we've got to make sure that your next United States Senator is Catherine Cortez Masto!

Audience member. I love you Obama!

The President. I love you back. I love you guys so much. I do.

So I was driving over here and going through—we didn't drive right through the Strip, but we drove passed the Strip—and it made me think that Vegas is a place where people are always looking to improve their odds. I notice, my staff never complains about a trip to Vegas. [*Laughter*] But I'm here right now to tell you that you've got a sure thing. You've got the winning hand. You've got Blackjack. And the way to do it, the way to make sure that you win this hand, the way you boost Catherine's odds of winning this election, the way you make sure that Jacky and Ruben are in Congress is to go vote! You've got to go vote! [*Applause*] You've got to vote!

Here in Nevada, you don't have to wait until November 8. Early voting started yesterday. Yes. you've got a ace, and you've got a jack. But you've got to make sure to turn over the card by voting! This game didn't start on November 8, the game ends on November 8. It's starting right now.

So, if you need to find out where you can vote early, just go to iwillvote.com. I want everybody to say that: iwillvote.com.

Audience members. Iwillvote.com!

The President. Iwillvote.com.

Audience members. Iwillvote.com!

The President. Iwillvote.com.

Audience members. Iwillvote.com!

The President. All right. See this nice, big sign: Vote early! And I need you also, because not everybody is as fired up, not everybody is as focused as you are, I need everybody to pull out your phones, if you've got it, right now. I know you guys have got phones: Pull out. [*Laughter*] If you've got your phone with you, pull it out. Don't just save it for the selfie. [*Laughter*] And text "volunteer" to 47246—47246—that way you can sign up for a volunteer shift in the last 4 days. Because we're going to need to make sure everybody votes. I need you to make phone calls. I need you to knock on doors. I need you to call up cousin Pookie and say, Pookie, it's time to vote. I need you to go—[*laughter*]—I need you to go call Jesse, say, Jesse, come on. Don't be sitting on the couch. It's time to vote. Everybody's got to vote early. That's how we won in '08. That's how we won in 2012. That's how we're going to win in 2016.

Because, let's face it, Nevada is always close. Nevada always makes you a little nervous because you kind of don't know what's going to happen. [*Laughter*] But that's what makes it exciting. I was here in Nevada in the closing days of both my campaigns; both times, you guys came through. I turned over that card, and it was an ace. And Michelle and I thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all the support and all the prayers these past 8 years. It has been such a privilege to serve you.

Audience member. We love you!

The President. But being back here in the closing days of another hard-fought campaign makes me think about how far we've come together. Back in '08, we had gone through two long wars. We were about to enter into the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes. Nevada was ground zero. You remember the housing market just collapsed. Folks were losing jobs, losing homes. On issues like health care, issues like climate change, we weren't doing anything about it, just kicking the can down the road.

And I remember—you remember I told you now, I said, look, I'm—talk to Michelle, I'm not a perfect man. [*Laughter*] I won't be a perfect President. But I told you I would work as hard as I could, every single day, to make sure that you had a better shot at living out your dreams.

And 8 years later, 8 years later, we've fought our way back from recession. We have created 15 million new jobs. We've slashed our dependence on foreign oil. We've doubled our production of clean energy, including right here in Nevada. Got solar panels all over the place, in part, thanks to the work that Harry did. Incomes went up last year more than any time since they've been keeping records. Poverty fell faster than any time since 1968. The uninsured rate is now at an alltime low. We brought our brave troops home to their families. We knocked out Usama bin Laden. Marriage equality is a reality in all 50 States.

High school graduation rates, never been higher; college enrollment at an alltime high—by so many measures, our country is stronger, it is more prosperous, it is safer than it was 8 years ago. But for all the progress we've made, if we don't work as hard as we can in these next 16 days, all that progress could be out the window. Because competing for the job I currently hold, you've got a guy who proves himself unfit for this office every single day, every single way. And on the other side, you've got somebody who is as qualified as has ever run for the Presidency: Hillary Rodham Clinton.

And here's the thing: Presidents can't do everything on their own. If I didn't have Harry, then I couldn't have gotten one what I got done. If we didn't have Nancy Pelosi, we would not have passed so many of the laws that have benefited millions of Americans. So we can't elect Hillary and then saddle her with a Congress that is do-nothing, won't even try to do something, won't even get their own stuff passed, much less the stuff you want passed. Who—all they've got to offer is blocking and obstructing every step of the way. We've got to have a Congress that's willing to make progress on the issues Americans care about.

Here in Nevada, you've—you're trying to replace one of the toughest fighters I've ever known in Harry Reid. So you can choose somebody with a proven track record for standing up for Nevada families: Catherine Cortez Masto. Because Catherine's story is Nevada's story. Think about it. Her grandfather comes here from Mexico, enlists in the U.S. Army, settles here in Nevada, works hard as a baker. Her dad started out parking cars at the Dunes Hotel, went on to live a life of public service. He made it possible for Catherine and her sister to get a great education.

And, Nevada, that's the kind of person you want representing you: somebody who's not going to forget where she came from. Somebody who knows what it's like to work hard. Somebody who knows what it's like for an immigrant to come here and live out the American Dream. You can make her the first-ever Latina to serve in the United States Senate ever. [*Applause*] Ever. And here's somebody who spent a career in Nevada working with Democrats and Republicans and law enforcement to do right by you and make you safer.

And meanwhile, you've got her opponent, Joe Heck.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo——

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Don't boo——

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Don't boo——

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Somebody asked me, he said: "I voted. Can I boo now?" [*Laughter*] I said, no, no, wait until all the votes are in. Go get some more folks to vote.

But Mr. Heck, he spent his time in Washington fighting for tax breaks for oil companies and billionaires like the Koch brothers. One of the things that's making this a tough race is they're sending millions of dollars here to try to elect him because they know that he's going to do what they want.

So, when it comes to figuring out who's going to fight for you to make sure the economy works for you, you've got a choice. Think about what happened after the housing crisis. Nevada was hit harder than anybody else: tens of thousands of foreclosures, folks underwater. What did Catherine do? One of the first attorneys general in America to stand up for families facing the hardship of foreclosure. Rolled up her sleeves and got to work to make sure families got help. Cares about making sure minimum wage workers get a raise. She

remembers her dad trying to makes ends meet in a low-paying job. Wants to make sure women get paid the same as men for doing the same work. Stands up for women and girls.

Her opponent voted again and again to defund Planned Parenthood.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo, vote.

Threatened to shut down the Government when he couldn't get his way, even though thousands of Nevada women depend on Planned Parenthood for basic health care, for cancer screenings. And then, just a few weeks ago, her opponent was supporting Donald Trump, who was bragging about actions that qualify as sexual assault.

Catherine's been a national leader in the fight against sex trafficking of teenage girls and violence against women and passed laws to make sure the penalties are tougher for predators, expanded sex offender registries, gave victims the right to sue their captors. And the other guy is supporting Donald Trump. What the heck? [*Laughter*] What the heck? Heck, no! Heck, no! Heck, no!

Audience members. Heck, no! Heck, no! Heck, no!

The President. [*Laughter*] Heck, no. Come on! Come on. On issue after issue, Nevada, you've got a clear choice.

If you care about immigration reform, you can vote for a Presidential candidate who sees immigrants only as "criminals" and "rapists," apparently never heard of people like Catherine's grandfather. Or you can vote for the granddaughter of an immigrant, who believes that everybody deserves a chance to contribute to this country that we love.

If you care about criminal justice reform and disrupting the pipeline from underfunded schools to overcrowded jails, and helping people who served their time rehabilitate themselves and become productive members of society, you can vote for an outstanding prosecutor and attorney general who's used her power to make the justice system fairer and our people safer. Or you can vote for the other guy.

Audience member. Heck, no!

The President. Heck, no.

Actually, there's one other difference between the candidates. Catherine never supported Donald Trump. She never said she had "high hopes" that he would become President. Never said she'd trust his fingers on the nuclear code. Now, I understand Joe Heck now wishes he never said those things about Donald Trump. But they're on tape. They're on the record. And now that Trump's poll numbers are cratering, suddenly, he says, well, no, I don't want to—I'm not supporting him.

Audience member. Too late!

The President. Too late. You don't get credit for that. Let—I'm being serious here. Hold on a second. I want to make a point here. I know a lot of Republicans. I've got Republican friends, I've got members of my family who are Republicans, and they don't think the way Donald Trump does. I understand that. So I'm not generalizing about all Republicans. But here's the thing: For years, Republican politicians and the far-right media outlets have pumped up all kinds of crazy stuff about me, about Hillary, about Harry. They said I wasn't born here. They said climate change is a hoax. They said that I was going to take everybody's guns away. They said that, when we were doing military exercises that we've been doing——

Audience member. Forever.

The President. ——forever, suddenly, this was a plot to impose martial law. This is what they've been saying for years now. So people have been hearing it, and they start thinking, well, maybe this is true.

And so, if the world that they've been seeing is that I'm powerful enough to cause hurricanes on my own and to steal everybody's guns in the middle of the night and impose martial law, even though I can't talk without a prompter—[*laughter*]—then is it any wonder that they end up nominating somebody like Donald Trump?

And the fact is, is that there are a lot of politicians who knew better. There are a lot of Senators who knew better. But they went along with these stories because they figured, you know what, this will help rile up the base, it will give us an excuse to obstruct what we're trying to do, we won't be able to appoint judg-

es, we'll gum up the works, we'll create gridlock, it will give us a political advantage.

So they just stood by and said nothing. And their base began to actually believe this crazy stuff. So Donald Trump did not start this. Donald Trump didn't start it. He just did what he always did, which is slap his name on it, take credit for it, and promote it. That's what he does.

And so now when suddenly it's not working and people are saying, wow, this guy is kind of out of line, all of a sudden, these Republican politicians who were okay with all this crazy stuff up to a point, suddenly, they're all walking away: "Oh, this is too much."

So, when you finally get them on tape bragging about actions that qualify as sexual assault and his poll numbers go down, suddenly that's a deal breaker. Well, what took you so long? What the heck? What took you so long? All these years—all these years you've been idolizing Ronald Reagan, and suddenly, your Presidential nominee is kissing up to Vladimir Putin, a former KGB officer. You've got a bromance with him—that was okay. You're a Republican official that says you love the Constitution, say that Harry and I are engaging in unconstitutional behavior—power grabs, executive actions—but you then are okay with a President who says he'd silence reporters; in a debate, says he will jail his opponent without due process; wants to deport whoever he wants; apparently has not heard of the 1st, 5th, and 14th Amendments. Why would you support him? Why didn't you offer him your pocket Constitution, like Captain Khan's father did, if you care so much about the Constitution?

All these years you've said you stand for family values. I'm sure that's what Joe Heck said, said he stood for family values. But why didn't you walk away months ago when you heard your nominee for President, the guy you were hoping could become President, call women "pigs," "dogs," "slobs"; grades them not on their character or their intelligence, but on a scale of 1 to 10?

You don't have to be a husband or a father to stand up for women, for our daughters. You don't have to be—you don't have to have a disability to say it's wrong to mock somebody with a disability. You don't have to be a Muslim to stand up for our fellow citizens who are just as patriotic as we are. You don't have to be a Democrat to think there's a problem with that. You just have to be a decent human being. I mean it.

And now the excuse they're using for why they should be elected is, "Well, maybe we did support Trump, and now we're being kind of quiet about it, but you should vote Republican anyway because we'll check Hillary's power, we'll be a counterweight." No, no, no. No, all—listen, they have been in charge of Congress now for the last 6 years basically. And what have they gotten done?

Audience members. Nothing!

The President. How have they helped you?

Audience members. No way!

The President. When we tried to pass minimum wage increases, they weren't for that. They weren't for immigration reform. They are not willing to support early childhood education initiatives. Haven't built infrastructure. We could be putting guys to work right now—and gals back to work right now—got their hard hats on, ready to do work building Nevada, creating jobs all across this great State. They haven't done that. I've asked them. So a vote for them is basically more gridlock. That's their argument. That's not a good argument.

Audience members. No!

The President. On issue after issue, Catherine Cortez Masto is going to be on your side, working for you.

Her opponent is going to have Koch brothers on line one and Donald Trump on line two. [*Laughter*] When Donald creates his TV station, I'm sure Joe Heck will be up on there, giving interviews. [*Laughter*]

Even after rescinding his endorsement of Trump, he said, "I want to support him, I really do." Really? So how does that work? You're for him, but you're not for him. But you're kind of for him. What the heck? [*Laughter*] You can't object to the things that Trump says and what he stands for, where he starts undermining our democracy by saying he may not even accept the results of an election——

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo——

Audience members. Vote!

The President. And then say that you wish you could stick with him. That's not leadership, that's cynical.

Audience members. Yeah!

The President. That means you'll say anything or be anybody just to get elected, depending on what's convenient at the time. And that's now what Nevada needs. And that's not what America needs. You need somebody who stands for principles like Catherine Cortez Masto. You need Members of Congress with principles, like Jacky Rosen, like Ruben Kihuen.

And if you want that kind of representation, then you've got to go to iwillvote.com. And you've got to early vote. Because there's only one way to lose this election: if you fold your hand and don't vote. You've got the ace underneath, but if you don't turn it over, you'll lose. So you've got to vote.

Audience member. It's my first time voting!

The President. Good! I'm proud of you. First-time voter right here. We need some more first-time voters. And we need some second-time voters, third and fourth and fifth and sixth-time voters. Do it big. Don't leaven any doubt. You don't—we don't want to leave any doubt.

Donald Trump is already talking about how the game is rigged. I've got to say: That means he's losing. You know, if you start making—if you've ever played a basketball game and, like, halfway in the middle of the game, suddenly, somebody starts saying, the refs are making me lose and I'm going to walk off the court—[*laughter*]—that means you're losing. And by the way, it means that you don't have what it takes to do this job, because there are a bunch of times where the—it gets tough. There are a lot of times where things don't go your way, and you've got to be able to just hang in there—the way Harry has hung in there, the way Hillary will hang in there. The way Catherine will hang in there.

And in terms of this whole rigging thing, look, I mean, I don't have to tell you this, but I'll just go ahead and tell you anyway. [*Laughter*] Your Governor is a Republican. You've got Republican Governors in almost all the swing States, like Florida, Ohio, North Carolina, Georgia, Iowa. You've got Republican Governors in Texas and Arizona. In every polling place, there are Democrats and Republicans watching how the ballots are filled out and how they're turned in. There are Republicans and Democrats watching how they are counted. If this is rigged, boy, it would be a really big conspiracy. [*Laughter*] And those folks—the Republican Governor is not going to rig an election for Hillary Clinton or rig an election for Catherine. So forget the rigging talk.

You know what is going to win this election? You are. We have made so much progress, despite the forces of opposition and discrimination and the politics of backlash. We have made progress. We haven't gotten everything done. We've got more work to do. There are still folks out there who are struggling. We've still got roads and airports to build. We've got people to put back to work. We've got young people who need more help going to college. We've got early childhood education programs to set up. We've got more clean energy to build. We've got immigration laws that need to be changed so we're a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants. We've got work to do to bring together our outstanding law enforcement officials with those who want to make sure that our law enforcement is color blind.

We've got so much work to do. And so progress does not stop with my Presidency. It doesn't stop when Harry Reid retires. We're just getting started. We're just getting started. But we've got to make the right choice. Progress is on the ballot. Civility is on the ballot. Tolerance is on the ballot. Justice is on the ballot. Equality is on the ballot. Democracy is on the ballot.

My name is not on the ballot——

Audience members. No!

The President. That's okay. That's okay. But if you want to give me and Michelle a good sendoff, then I need you to join us. If you want to give Harry Reid a good sendoff, we've got to have a good turnout. I need you to work just as

hard for Catherine Cortez Masto and just as hard for Hillary Clinton and just as hard for Ruben and Jacky as you worked for us.

I need you to knock on doors. I need you to make phone calls. I need you to talk to your friends. I need you to vote early.

And if you do that, we will elect Catherine Cortez Masto to be your next outstanding Senator. We will elect Hillary Clinton to be the next President of the United States. We'll show our kids that we are still the greatest nation on Earth! And we're just going to keep on getting better because of you!

God bless you, Vegas! Thank you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:47 p.m. in the gymnasium at Cheyenne High School. In his remarks, he referred to Cynthia Cortez Musgrove, sister of former Nevada Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto; Charles G. Koch, chief executive officer and chairman of the board, and David H. Koch, executive vice president, Koch Industries, Inc.; President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; Khizr Khan, father of Capt. Humayun Khan, USA, who was killed in Iraq on June 8, 2004; New York Times reporter Serge F. Kovaleski, who suffers from arthrogryposis, which limits the functioning of his joints; Gov. Brian E. Sandoval of Nevada; Gov. Richard L. Scott of Florida; Gov. John R. Kasich of Ohio; Gov. Patrick L. McCrory of North Carolina; Gov. J. Nathan Deal of Georgia; Gov. Terry E. Branstad of Iowa; Gov. Gregory W. Abbott of Texas; and Gov. Douglas A. Ducey of Arizona

Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Fundraiser in La Jolla, California

October 23, 2016

The President. Thank you. Don't worry, I'll do all the acknowledgements. The mike is not working. I think they can all see me. If I can see them, they can see me. [*Laughter*] Just settle down. [*Laughter*] I know this is your house, but I've got this. I've done this a few times before. [*Laughter*]

Let me begin by just saying thank you to Christine. She is such a dear friend. She has been there from the start when I was young and green behind the ears and no gray hair. [*Laughter*] She took me on as a project—[*laughter*]—and despite me being a little rough around the edges, she smoothed things out. And I still remember with great fondness that first event that we did here. At that time, we were campaigning for other Members of the Senate and trying to get—and Members of the House, trying to boost our majorities there and win back the majority in the Senate.

And she has just been not only a tireless worker on behalf of progressive causes, but just a dear, dear friend. So I'm very grateful to her.

Speaking of tireless workers and dear friends, I said this before publicly—she may get tired of it, but I'm going to keep on saying it—whatever success that I've had as President of the United States, I owe in large part to the extraordinary skill, intelligence, acumen, toughness, and loyalty of the former Speaker and soon-to-be Speaker again of the House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi.

A couple of outstanding current members of Congress that are here: first of all, Ben Ray Luján, who has taken on the tireless and thankless job of being the chairman of the DCCC; and one of your own from the great State of California, Susie Davis is here; and Scott Peters.

And I like Christine's prognostications. They were right when it came to me, and I believe that she is right when we say that we're going to have an outstanding attorney—veteran, 32 years in the Marine Corps, combat duty, somebody who knows what it means to sacrifice on behalf of the Nation, and somebody who is going to be an outstanding Member of Congress—Doug Applegate.

Now, I want to leave as much time as possible for questions, and some of you have been to these things before, so I'm not going to give a long speech. I just gave one in Nevada, which was fun.

Audience member. We heard you.

The President. But I do want to just make a couple of quick remarks. Obviously, a lot has changed in the 8 years since I was sworn in as President, and a lot of you here are to be thanked for getting me there. We went from the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes to 15 million new jobs and a 5-percent unemployment rate, cutting it in half.

Last year, we saw the largest increase in incomes ever recorded in a single year, and we saw the biggest drop in poverty since 1968. We have seen a housing market that's recovered, 401(k)s that have replenished themselves. We have doubled our production of clean energy, grown the economy while reducing carbon emissions faster than any other advanced nation. We have brought well over 100,000 troops back from Iraq and Afghanistan, taken out bin Laden, rolling back ISIL.

We've been able to reduce our dropout rates; our high school rates are higher than they ever have been before. College enrollment included among Latino and African Americans is the highest that it's ever been.

Across almost every economic index, we are better off than we were when we came in by a long shot. Not to mention 20 million people who have health insurance who didn't have it before.

Now, a lot of that we got done because of really smart people in the White House who told me what to do. [*Laughter*] And I had enough sense to listen. But a lot of this got done because, in the first 2 years, when really the template for our economy and our foreign policy was being formed, at that moment where the well-being of this country was teetering, I had a congressional majority that was able to deliver; that was willing to take tough votes; that was willing to invest in an American auto industry that was on the brink of collapse, even when it was really unpopular; that was willing to invest in clean energy when the clean energy industry—solar, wind—was on the verge of collapse, insisted that we include that in our stimulus package, our recovery package; that made sure that Pell grants were available to millions more kids at a higher level than they had before.

Again and again, the House of Representatives was willing to take really tough votes, most prominently in passing the Affordable Care Act, despite the fact that folks knew that it might hurt them politically. Because it was the right thing to do. Because they believed that there's no point in getting elected if you're not actually delivering to the people who sent you there. That public service is just that: It is a service to the public. It is not a jobs program for yourself. [*Laughter*] It is not a means of getting on TV or parlaying it into some lucrative lobbying gig, but it is something you do because you believe in this country and you understand that this country only works when we're willing to make an investment in the next generation and we are willing to do tough things so that 20 years from now or 30 years from now or 50 years from now, people could look back and say, you know what, that was a responsible generation.

Now, after Nancy Pelosi was no longer Speaker, Congress essentially shut down. And so much of the progress that we've done subsequently—for example, most recently this year with getting the Paris Agreement on climate change, and then we just followed up with two other agreements that bind countries internationally to reduce carbon emissions in airlines and making sure that we're not releasing really harmful HFCs into the atmosphere—those are things that we ended up having to do administratively.

But we didn't get any help from Congress. In fact, the House of Representatives and the Senate have been controlled by Republicans now for the last 2 years. Prior to that, the House of Representatives was controlled by Republicans for 4 years. And they couldn't get even their own stuff passed. [*Laughter*] I thought that for the last 2 years, I was going to spend a lot of time vetoing bills. I didn't have

to. [*Laughter*] Because they are not even organized enough to get their own stuff down.

And as a consequence, things that previously were never considered ideological—like rebuilding our roads, our bridges, our ports; putting people back to work; making our economy more productive—stalled. And in budget negotiations, because of Nancy's savvy, we've been able to at least embed in our budget some of the priorities of the American people. But we could be doing so much more.

And that's why I'm working so hard, that's why Michelle is working so hard, that's why Joe Biden is working so hard as we exit the stage to make sure that we're passing the baton not only to Hillary Clinton, but also to a Congress that is willing to do the people's business.

And there's no greater microcosm for why we need to get this done than the race that has already been mentioned between Doug Applegate and Darrell Issa.

Now, I'm not going to belabor this point, but let me just point out that as far as I can tell, Doug [Darrell]* Issa's primary contribution to the United States Congress has been to obstruct and to waste taxpayer dollar on trumped-up investigations that have led nowhere. And this is now a guy who, because poll numbers are bad, has sent out brochures with my picture on them—[*laughter*]—touting his cooperation on issues with me.

Now, that is the definition of chutzpah. [*Laughter*] Here's a guy who called my administration perhaps the most corrupt in history—despite the fact that actually we have not had a major scandal in my administration—that, when Trump was suggesting that I wasn't even born here, said, well, I don't know, was not sure. We can pull up the quotes.

This guy has spent all his time simply trying to obstruct, to feed the same sentiments that resulted in Donald Trump becoming their nominee. I think somebody called Darrell Issa—was this you, Doug, who said Darrell Issa was Trump before Trump? [*Laughter*] And now he's sending out brochures touting his cooperation with me.

Now, that is shameless. To his credit, I will say that he has been very pleasant to me at our Christmas parties. [*Laughter*] No, he is. I'm serious. I mean, he's said hello, and he's brought some of his family members, and I'm always happy to take pictures with family members. This is true—a number of Republican caucus members, like Michele Bachmann, they'll show up, and there's, like, good cheer and bipartisanship for one evening. Some of them say, I'm praying for you. [*Laughter*] And I don't question the sincerity that they are praying for me: Please, change this man from the socialist Muslim that he is. [*Laughter*] No, I'm sure it's more sincere than that. But beyond these interpersonal conversations, this is not somebody who is serious about working on problems.

Now, you contrast it with Doug; he's shown himself to care about this country. He's made the investment in time and energy, putting himself at risk for our safety and our security. That's somebody you want in Congress. That's somebody you want in Congress. And if you extrapolate from that particular race to all the races that are taking place around the country, it is absolutely vital that we do everything we can to maximize turnout, to maximize enthusiasm, to make sure that we not only reject the kind of politics that Donald Trump represents, but we reject the climate inside the Republican Party that resulted in Donald Trump getting the nomination. And that starts in the House of Representatives.

Nancy will tell you, Susan will tell you, Scott will tell you—the things that you're hearing Trump saying, they're said on the floor of the House of Representatives all the time. The Freedom Caucus in the House of Representatives are repeatedly promoting crazy conspiracy theories and demonizing opponents.

And so, as I said at the event in Vegas, Donald Trump didn't build that. He just slaps his name on it—[*laughter*]—and took credit for it. And the strongest message we can send—the message, by the way, that is most likely to get us past gridlock and give people some

* White House correction.

confidence that Government can work and Congress can work is if we have Nancy Pelosi as Speaker of the House, because Nancy knows how she can get things done and deliver on behalf of the American people.

So, just to bring things full circle—Christine, I could not be more grateful for having helped start this amazing journey that we've been on. But if we're really going to bring it full circle, it means that we're assuring that the progress that we've made continues. And your presence here gives me confidence that we can make that happen.

All right? Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:57 p.m. at the residence of Christine Forester. In his remarks, he referred to Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton; Democratic congressional candidate Col. Douglas Applegate, USMC (Ret.); and former Rep. Michele M. Bachmann. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Reception for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in La Jolla

October 24, 2016

The President. Thank you, everybody. Thank you. Thank you. You're still fired up, still ready to go! Thank you so much. Everybody, have a seat. Have a seat. I've got a few things to say.

First of all, I just want to thank Mark and Hanna for opening up this spectacular home. Please give them a big round of applause. In addition, we've got one of the outstanding Members of Congress who has had my back on a bunch of tough stuff, Scott Peters. Where's Scott? There he is.

So I'm trying to figure out why I didn't move to—[*laughter*]—San Diego right now. I'm looking around and I'm thinking somewhere I took a wrong turn—[*laughter*]—and I didn't end up here, looking out over the Pacific Ocean. It looks pretty good.

Audience members. Yes!

Audience member. And the golf course.

The President. And the golf course is good too. [*Laughter*] But it's not too late. Well, Michelle and I will have to do some negotiations, but—[*laughter*]. Because it is true our lease is running out. [*Laughter*] So we've been going around, checking to make sure that Bo and Sunny didn't ruin the carpet and—[*laughter*]. Because we want our security deposit back when we leave. [*Laughter*]

But listen, it's wonderful to be here. When I came here in 2005, I was a Senator and was campaigning for other Senators. In 2007, I was just beginning my race for the Presidency. And there were so many good friends here in San Diego who were early investors in a guy who—whose name nobody really could pronounce. [*Laughter*] And fast-forward 8 years later, you think about the incredible journey that we've taken.

When I took office, we were on the verge of a Great Depression: the worst financial and economic crisis of my lifetime and most people's lifetimes here. We were losing 800,000 jobs a month. The financial system was locked up. It was global, not just national. People were losing their homes, their pensions.

Eight years later, we've created 15 million new jobs. We have cut the unemployment rate in half; 401(k)s have recovered. We have provided health insurance for 20 million Americans who didn't have it before. And for those who already had health insurance, now you can't be barred because of a preexisting condition. Women can't be charged more than men just for being a woman. Preventive care, mammograms are all covered. Young people can stay on their parent's plan up until they're 26 years old.

We've seen an expansion of Pell grants that are helping young people go to college. High school graduation rates the highest they've ever been. College enrollment are the highest that they have been.

We have doubled the production of clean energy. We have actually been able to slow carbon emissions faster than any other nation on Earth, even as we were growing rapidly.

We have been able to make sure Iran doesn't have a nuclear weapon. We've been able to get bin Laden. We've been able to pull our troops back home so that they can be with their families.

By almost every measure, we can say and prove that America is better off than when I got started. But all that progress is at risk because if my successor does not continue on this progress—if my successor is interested in reversing the gains we've made that have driven the uninsured rate to the lowest in history; if my successor reverses the kinds of tax policies and jobs policies that resulted in the largest jump in income and the biggest drop in poverty that's been recorded in a couple of generations last year; if my successor doesn't believe in climate change and isn't worried about the oceans rising; if my successor does not believe in an inclusive America where everybody who works hard and is willing to do their part has a place; if we have a successor who divides us rather than brings us together, then a lot of these gains could slip away.

And that is why I have been working so hard and Michelle has been working so hard to make sure that probably as qualified a person as has ever run for this office is the 45th President of the United States, Hillary Clinton.

Now the good news is that at the moment, the polls show that Hillary is enjoying a lead. But I want to make sure that everybody understands: This has been an extraordinarily volatile race and a volatile time, and so we can't take anything for granted. Voting has already begun. There are a lot of States like Ohio and Florida that are way too close to call. We're still 2 weeks away and that means that we have to roll up our sleeves and work as hard as we can to make sure that people actually turn out to vote.

The majority of the American people believe in a higher minimum wage. The majority of the American people believe that we should do something about climate change. The majority of the American people want to invest in every child so they get a great education. But not everybody votes. And we don't always have working majorities in Congress, and we don't always turn out the kind of votes that result in the policies that we want. But this is one of those moments where we can't afford to sit back and just assume that everything is going to work itself out. The stakes are just too high.

And one of the reasons that I'm so proud of Hillary is that she doesn't take anything for granted. She is somebody who works hard every single day. And it's not always flashy. It's not always fully appreciated. She is somebody who does her homework and knows her policy and grinds it out, and if she's knocked down, she gets back up. And I'm here to tell you, because if you haven't been in that Oval Office and sat in that chair, you don't know what it's like. Those qualities of persistence and a dogged passion for doing the right thing and working hard on behalf of working families all across the country, that's what counts. That's the kind of President you want.

You don't want a President who's spending time tweeting all the time. [*Laughter*] You want a President who is serious about keeping America safe and expanding prosperity for all people. And I've seen Hillary work. She's been in the room. She was there when we made the decision to go after bin Laden, even though we weren't absolutely certain and there were huge risks involved in doing it. She has traveled to over a hundred countries and is well regarded and well respected all around the world.

She knows that the decisions that we make are not abstract and you don't just poll to see how it's going to turn out, because it's going to have an impact on a veteran or a soldier or some young person who's trying to go to college for the first time, or some young person who was brought here as an immigrant at the age of 2 or 3 or 4 and are American by every

standard except for a piece of paper. And she knows that that young person wants to contribute to this country as well, and we've got to make sure that we give him a chance. She understands that.

So she is eminently qualified, really well prepared, has the temperament, has the work ethic, has the policy chops to be an outstanding President. And then there's the other guy. [*Laughter*]

And I'm not going to belabor why this other guy is not fit to hold this office, because every time he talks—[*laughter*]—you get more proof that that's not the guy that you want as President of the United States. And I will tell you, the—some of you may be aware of the fact that, like, Michelle does not really love politics. [*Laughter*] She's—this was not her first choice to—for me. She would have preferred a quieter life, a little bit more out of the limelight. She thought I'd do okay so she said, all right, go ahead. [*Laughter*] But the passion that she's brought to campaigning this time speaks to the degree that this is—this election is different. The choice is different, and I talked about this at the convention.

We always have differences between Democrats and Republicans, and that's a good thing. I am not somebody who believes that any single party has a monopoly on wisdom. Democrats have their blind spots, and we want a healthy two-party system where serious folks enter into a debate around how do we make sure that we're growing the economy. How do we make sure that there are good jobs? How do we make sure that our young people are prepared for a competitive 21st-century economy? How do we make sure that we keep this country safe and don't overextend ourselves, but are vigilant in dealing with things like terrorism? Those are legitimate things to debate.

And in the two campaigns that I had, the first against John McCain and the second against Mitt Romney, I did not agree with them on a whole bunch of things. And I was pretty confident that the policies that I was offering the American people were more likely to help the average American be safe and be prosperous and certainly were more likely to help future generations. But I always felt as if John McCain and Mitt Romney were basically honorable people. I always thought that—[*applause*]—I always felt as if push comes to shove, they would do the right thing if they ended up occupying the position of President. I didn't—I wasn't concerned about the Republic if they had won.

I—and so part of the reason Michelle is working the way she is, is because she understands, as I understand, that some more fundamental values are at stake in this election. It has to do with our basic standards of decency. How do we treat people? Do we treat people who are of a different faith as part of the fabric of America, or do we label them as something foreign, not a "real American," and thereby subject to different standards when it comes to how our laws apply? Do we think of women as equal and full citizens, capable of doing anything, or do we think of them as objects of either scorn or lust or our own satisfactions?

Do we think of the Constitution as something fundamental that all of us have an obligation to try to uphold, or do we think that it's just something that we can pick and choose from at our convenience depending on what's expedient? Do we think that Government is something serious, that we have an obligation to make sure that, to the best of our abilities, we leave the country a little bit better off than how we found it? Or do we think that it's an infomercial or a reality TV show—[*laughter*]—and we can say anything or do anything without any fidelity to the truth whatsoever, just make stuff up? So that at a certain point, everything is contested; there's no solid ground because you can just say anything and do anything.

And my conclusion, Michelle's conclusion is, is that we can't have that in the Oval Office. Because what is true is, is that our kids watch us. I said when I ran for President in 2008, I was not a perfect man, and I would not be a perfect President, but I took seriously the fact that in this job, our kids are paying attention. The entire world is paying attention. And it's important to try to uphold those basic standards even though you know occasionally you're going to make a mistake; even though

you know that even when you get it right, you're not going to get necessarily a hundred percent of what you want. It is important to understand the responsibility of this office. And I'm—I don't think I'm alone in thinking that Donald Trump doesn't believe that and he doesn't care about it.

America is great. America can survive just about anything. But what America cannot have for any prolonged period of time is to have the person who is the only elected official elected by all the people of the United States, and who speaks on behalf of this Nation in world affairs, as a fundamentally unserious person and somebody whose standards of ethics and tolerance and how they treat other people is corrosive. We can't have that.

And that's why this is so important. That's why we've got to work as hard as we can, not just to make sure that Hillary wins, but to make sure she wins big. To send a clear message about who we are as a people. To send a clear message about what America stands for. That is why everybody here has got to work as hard as they can over these next 2 weeks. We want to win big! We want to win big! We don't just want to eke it out, particularly when the other guy is already starting to gripe about how the game is rigged. [*Laughter*] Come on.

I was saying the other day, I—those of you who have been involved in sports as you were growing up, or actually, even if you're just playing in the playground when you're like 5 or 6 years old—[*laughter*]—you always met those—you know there was always the kid who, like, if they weren't winning, they'd be all like starting to have a tantrum and start whining and complaining about this isn't fair. [*Laughter*] Well, no, you just got beat—[*laughter*]—that's all. And so we don't want there to be any kind of confusion—[*laughter*]—because that, too, is corrosive of our democracy.

Our democracy depends on consent. It's reliant on the good graces of both parties saying, once an election is over then we come together as a country. And once again, it appears that Hillary's opponent is not prepared to play by those same rules. So we've got a lot of work to do.

Now, I just want to touch on the fact that it's not enough just to elect Hillary Clinton as President. If you look at all the legislative gains, with a few exceptions, that I've accomplished during my 8 years as President, 80 percent of them, 85 percent of them occurred in the first 2 years when we had a Democratic Congress. And that doesn't mean that we were not constantly reaching out to Republicans. I still remember the first couple weeks I was in office, where we knew we had to take bold significant steps to get the economy back on track, and driving up to meet with the House Republican caucus to work with them to shape a recovery package, and hearing that before I had even gotten to the Capitol, John Boehner had released a news release saying, "We're not going to vote for it," before they had even sat down with us.

So we reached out. For the most part what we got in return was obstruction, and so we just went ahead and did what we needed to do to rescue the auto industry; to make sure that the economy started growing jobs again instead of shedding them; to make sure that in a country as wealthy as ours, everybody had the opportunity to get basic health care; to make sure that our young people were able to afford a college education.

We made extraordinary gains because we had a majority, despite a stated strategy by Mitch McConnell, the head of the Senate, that their most important goal was simply to defeat me in the next election. This is right after I had been elected. [*Laughter*] I mean, there wasn't even like a—sort of a, I don't know, 6-month pause where we said, "We'll try to govern for a while."

And then, even though we maintained our majority in the Senate, the House went Republican. And from that point forward, what we saw consistently was gridlock, obstruction, "no," threats to shut down the Government in order to defund Planned Parenthood, a willingness to potentially risk the full faith and credit of the United States Government unless they were going to get their way on slashing Medicaid and Medicare and other programs

that people rely on. And that's how it's been ever since.

Over the last 2 years, the Senate has also been in the hands of the majority, and I was actually anticipating that I was going to be using my veto pen a lot. I figured, well, you know, House Republicans, Senate Republicans, they're going to get together, they're going to pass these laws I don't like. I'm going to—I was getting my arm exercise. [*Laughter*] And, turns out they can't even pass their own stuff. [*Laughter*] I haven't even been able to use my veto pen. They are not organized enough to get their own priorities passed through Congress. It's Keystone Cops up there. [*Laughter*]

And the reason this is important is because now that they are beginning to suspect that their nominee may not end up winning and becoming President of the United States, the primary argument that the Republican Party is making—and they are pouring millions of dollars, tens of millions of dollars, maybe more into all the battleground States and States all across the country—the main argument that the Republicans are making is, you need to elect us as, quote, unquote, "a check" on Hillary Clinton. A check.

And I just want to translate that for you. A check means that we will continue in an unprecedented fashion to block the appointment of perhaps the most qualified jurist ever to be nominated to the Supreme Court, Merrick Garland. A check means the possibility of another Government shutdown unless we get some crazy riders that are attached to the budget that have nothing to do with the budget, but have to do with the particular social agenda of the Freedom Caucus, so called. A check means further efforts to block just basic progress on us trying to reduce our carbon emissions and deal with climate change because the official position of the Republican Party is to deny that the planet is getting warmer, despite what 99 percent of scientists all around the world say.

I was in Florida last week, and you had Marco Rubio down there who, in a debate said, "I really don't buy all this stuff," and there are—there's like 2 feet of water—[*laughter*]—on a sunny day in streets in the middle of cities in South Florida, coming up through the ground. [*Laughter*]

So a check means no to raising the minimum wage. A check means no to equal pay for equal work legislation. A check means that we're not going to invest in early childhood education. A check means that we're not going to get serious about dealing with all the major issues that the American people desperately want to see dealt with.

And so I—it is really important that we push back and defeat this argument that somehow the duly elected President of the United States should simply be blocked from doing anything by the opposition party. They're not making an argument that we want to work with her to get things done. They are saying, we are going to say no to everything. That's what they mean by a check.

And the reason that they want to approach it this way and—is that we've become so cynical about Washington. And so often it's portrayed as this equivalent problem of Democrats and Republicans just not getting along, that our attitude ends up being, "Well, you know what, if we can just split the difference; and our attitude is a plague on all their houses, then nothing will get done, but at least there won't be too much damage done."

And that's what the Republicans are counting on. They're counting on people thinking that gridlock is the best we can do because that plays to their basic philosophy that Government has no role in helping a kid aspire to something higher. Government has no role in making sure somebody has health care. Government has no role in making sure that we are caring for the environment and for the planet.

So they're okay with gridlock, but you know what? We can do so much better than that. The frustration, the anger that we are seeing in our politics is a direct result not of doing too much, but because we don't seem to just get basic stuff done. Congress just shuts down, stuff that used to be self-apparent, stuff that Democrats and Republicans used to agree on—rebuilding our infrastructure. We could cut down the unemployment rate by another percentage point; grow the economy by anoth-

er percentage point just by rebuilding roads, bridges, airports. Creating a new smart grid for how we distribute power, putting people back to work all across the country, including, by the way, some of the very folks who are so frustrated that it's led them to start voting for Donald Trump.

Well, if you're frustrated about more jobs and a faster growing economy, you've got to understand how this happened. It happened because the Republican Party wanted to put a check on progress. We've got to vote against that. We've got to push back against that. We've got to make a bold, sustained, serious argument that America can do better than just gridlock; that Democrats have a responsibility to work with Republicans, but Republicans have to want to actually get something done to move this country forward.

And if your only argument is to do nothing and that is the best that America can do, you do not deserve to be serving in Washington as a Congressman or as a Senator, because we've got enough of doing nothing. We need folks who are there ready to roll up their sleeves and do something to actually move this country forward. That's what we're fighting for.

So we've got some work to do the last 2 weeks. And I will tell you that it has been obviously the honor and the privilege of my life to serve as your President. But I always remind people of something that Justice Louis Brandeis once said: The most important office in a democracy is the office of citizen. I won't be President in a few months, but I will remain a citizen just like you. And the way this country works is that each of us carry a certain responsibility, a certain duty to make sure that this grand experiment in democracy sustains itself, that it continues.

This is not a spectator sport. We have to be involved. And over the next 2 weeks, everybody here is going to have a test about the degree to which we are fulfilling that duty. And if you are not doing every single thing that you can, if you don't think this is the highest priority of concern to your family and your children and your grandchildren, then you haven't been paying attention.

And if all of you fulfill that duty, fulfill that responsibility right alongside me, right alongside Michelle, well, Hillary is going to be all right. And we're going to have a Democratic Congress. And we're going to get some stuff done. And we will be able to say to ourselves that this was a moment in which America chose its best and not worst self.

Thank you very much, everybody. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:31 a.m. at the residence of Mark and Hanna Gleiberman. In his remarks, he referred to 2008 Republican Presidential nominee Sen. John S. McCain III; 2012 Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney; former Speaker of the House of Representatives John A. Boehner; and Sen. Marco A. Rubio.

Remarks During a Conference Call With Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act Enrollment Assisters and Volunteers
October 27, 2016

Thank you so much, Dora. And thank you for the incredible work that you've done in the Rio Grande Valley. I know you've just signed up people tirelessly. And from vetting in-person assistance in the local Head Start programs so that you can reach parents, hosting 24-hour enrollment events with elected officials, going out on field trips to help agricultural workers get themselves and their families covered—you have done it all.

And for those of you who are listening, you should know that Dora's nickname is Dora the Explorer because she goes after everything. And it's the reason that we've seen so much success all across the country, is because of people like Dora and all of you who are on this call.

This is the largest call we've ever hosted from the White House. We've got over 25,000

folks registering from across the country, and that's a testament to how much passion and how many people are behind this effort. And all of you are so dedicated to helping people in your community get access to quality and affordable coverage.

So I wanted to take a few minutes just to speak to you right now before we kick off our fourth open enrollment period on November 1, because you've been working hard to get ready and I want you to know that I am paying attention and everybody in my administration is going to be working just as hard alongside you.

Now, the good news is, thanks to the ACA, 20 million Americans have gained coverage. The Nation's uninsured rate now stands at its lowest level ever. But we've got more work to do because we have millions more to cover. And I know that you've seen some of the headlines this week about premiums. They're increasing in some States, even though they're very stable in one State or even they're declining. But I want to make sure everybody has the facts you need to be successful in your efforts to reach those who don't get coverage on the job or don't qualify for Medicare or don't qualify for Medicaid. Those for—those are the folks who, for too long, fell through the cracks. And they were the people who ACA was designed to help.

For them, if they're shopping in the marketplace in 2017, because of the tax credits that protect people from rising premiums, more than 7 in 10 consumers will be able to find a plan for less than $75 a month. And if they're a returning customer, who is shopping around and selecting the lowest cost plan offered that has similar benefits, the average premiums would actually fall by $28 per month, or 20 percent, compared to last year. So they actually decrease, not increase, by 20 percent. And these are the kinds of things that somehow are not always reported on.

The one thing that's been a challenge, obviously, since we passed the Affordable Care Act is the politics of it. Because there is a faction of people who are continually trying to root for failure, despite the fact that we keep on insuring people and folks continue to get help.

So the bottom line is that most people are going to be pleasantly surprised at just how affordable their options are if we can just get them to see for themselves. This is not one of those things where they're going to be surprised or have to engage in guesswork. If we are able to get people to actually check out their options for themselves at healthcare.gov, they will find out that despite some of the headlines that don't always explain the fact that premiums going up don't necessarily translate into higher premiums for people who are getting tax credits—if they can just see that for themselves, then they will exercise that option.

But we're going to have to kind of clear the bugs off the windshield so people can see the road ahead. And that's where you guys come in. That's why what you do is so important. Because there may be people who haven't yet signed up for affordable care, are cynical or skeptical about the marketplace because of all the political noise around, and so they've never actually bothered to take a look to see if this something that they—could help them and something that they can afford.

And I know the amazing impact you can make in your communities by helping folks get covered because your work is one part recruitment—you're out there busting up misinformation and myth. You're a counselor and a friend as you help people make the right choice for their families. I have seen you do it. I saw the efforts that Milwaukee took in the Healthy Communities Challenge last year. They were opening up libraries for enrollment events, digital signs on county buses. And it reached tens of thousands of uninsured in that community.

In Miami Dade College, where I went last week, it's a school that set the standard for the way campuses should engage their students and faculty and staff and alumni to make sure they know what options are available to them to give them peace of mind and to save them money. And in fact, Miami Dade was part of the inspiration of this year's Healthy Campus Challenge, our effort to work with campuses

and local community leaders to reach the uninsured both on campus and in surrounding communities.

And I hope schools that are on the line will opt in to our Healthy Campus Challenge by November 1, because there are tons of young people who are uninsured. They're the cheapest to insure. They're going—they've got the most affordable options available, but oftentimes, when you're young, you think you're invincible, and you don't worry about it until, unfortunately, something happens.

So I'm incredibly optimistic about the great work you're going to do during this enrollment season. And just so you know, we're not letting up here. Michelle and I and Joe Biden and Jill Biden, we're going to be right by your side. We're going to be doing op-eds and calling into radio programs and doing all kinds of PSAs and just getting the word out. And we just have to keep running through the tape until the end of the open enrollment period on January 31 and beyond.

But the main thing I just wanted to say to all of you is, I could not be more grateful for your commitment. This has been one of the honors and privileges of being President, was to see each of you engaging in this life-changing and lifesaving work. And I am grateful for that.

But I want to end by not only saying thank you, but also recognizing the challenge we've got here. Because of the incredibly fierce political resistance around giving everybody health care—something I've never fully understood, why anybody would run on a platform of people being uninsured instead of insured—part of what we can do this time is to overcome the skeptics, to prove people wrong, and to provide momentum so that when the next administration comes in, they are starting from a position of strength, and we'll be able to say, you know what, this program is working well, it can work even better.

And I think that this ends up being really a test of our commitment to health care over the long term, not just this open enrollment period. And I think we're at a critical time where we have to show that this program works for people if they just see what their options are. And we're not going to get that much help through the media. It's—this is going to be a ground game. This is a matter of going door to door, campus to campus, friend to friend, neighbor to neighbor, person to person. You are the people who are going to make sure that this starter home we built with the Affordable Care Act ultimately delivers on the promise that every single person in America has health care.

And in this process, I'm just one player, and the legislation is just the beginning. You are the ones who are going to really make an impact. And if you guys do a great job this time out, then it's not just the people you are signing up this time that are going to be impacted; you will create the atmosphere that allows us to make sure that we build on this progress.

And ultimately, not only the millions of people who still don't have coverage in this country are going to get it, but all the generations to come who will be able to look back and say this was the moment when we really delivered on a longstanding promise of affordable health care for every single person in America. They're going to be able to look back and say that those folks who were in neighborhoods and making calls and knocking on doors and working on their college campuses, they were the ones who did it. So it's in your hands, and I need you guys to really understand that.

So God bless you. I'm so proud of all of you. And with that, I'm going to turn over the call to Secretary Sylvia Burwell, who is going to be able to give you all kinds of details and updates in terms of how the ACA is working. Okay?

Thank you so much, everybody. Sylvia?

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:39 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Dora Garcia Correa, community organizer, Enroll America, who introduced the President; and Jill T. Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in Orlando, Florida

October 28, 2016

The President. Hello, Orlando! I said, hello, Orlando! Hello, UCF! Go Knights!

I understand you play Houston this weekend. You guys feeling all right?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Are you fired up? Are you ready to go? Oh, I'm fired up. Look at this crowd.

To every—I think it's being broadcast outside the auditorium, everybody who couldn't get in because we ended up being a little too packed and the fire marshal had to close things off. I just wanted you to know if you're outside, I love you too!

Can everybody please give Devi a big round of applause for that great introduction? She's the kind of young lady that makes us proud. Couple other people I want to acknowledge—your outstanding mayor, Buddy Dyer, is in the house. Your wonderful senior Senator, Bill Nelson, is here. Your next Members of Congress: former Governor Charlie Crist, Val Demings, Stephanie Murphy, Darren Soto. Your next United States Senator, Patrick Murphy. And all of you are here.

And I am here to say thank you. I want to say thank you, because it has been——

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you back! I do. You know, it has been——

Audience members. Obama! Obama! Obama!

The President. It has been a privilege of a lifetime to serve as your President. And Michelle and I could not be more grateful for your support and your prayers over all these years. But, but—hold up, hold up—[*laughter*]—but we're not done yet. I've got one campaign left in me.

Michelle and I've got a little more work to do. So I'm here today, Florida, to ask you to work hard, as you did for me, to make sure that Hillary Clinton is the next President of the United States of America.

I didn't see the band back there. What's going on, band? Sorry, but I just love marching bands, so I had to acknowledge the marching band. Are you guys from—you're not from the college, you're from high school, right? Where you from?

Ocoee High School Marching Band members. [*Inaudible*]

The President. What did they say? High school?

Band members. Ocoee!

The President. There you go. Ocoee. All right, Ocoee, we're proud of you.

Now, where was I? Listen, hold on, hold on. You guys are just so excited. Now let me say this. Florida is always a battleground State. Florida is just a big, diverse State, which means that the races in Florida are always close. I remember when I was campaigning here in the closing days of another hard-fought campaign 8 years ago, and some of you were only 4, so—[*laughter*].

But if you will recall, we were going through two long wars, we were in the early days of the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes. On everything from health care to climate change to criminal justice issues, we had just been kicking the can down the road for way too long. And I said at that time that I wasn't a perfect man, I wouldn't be a perfect President. I said at the time that if you elected me, we wouldn't solve every problem on day one. We wouldn't solve it all in 1 year, or one term, or even in one Presidency.

But what I told you was that I would work as hard as I could every single day to do right by you. That every day, when I walked into that Oval Office, I'd be thinking about the folks I met on the campaign trail. I'd be thinking about the students who were trying to get a good education without a ton of debt. I'd be thinking about the working families who were trying to figure out how to pay the bills, and maybe they had lost their homes or they had lost their pensions because of the economic crisis. I told you that I would be thinking about folks who didn't have health care and were worried about how they were going to make

sure that somebody in their family that they loved got treated fairly.

And I will tell you this: I've made mistakes during these 8 years, and there have been times where we've had ups, and there have been times where we have had lows. But I kept that promise to work for you as hard as I could.

And you kept faith with me, and working together, what we've seen is that an America that was at the edge of a depression battled back, and we turned job losses into 15 million new jobs. And last year, incomes went up faster than any time that they've been keeping records. And poverty went down faster than any time since 1968. We just learned this week that the economy grew faster than any time in the last 2 years.

We've seen an America that went from too many people uninsured to now 20 million people with health care who didn't have it before and the lowest uninsured rate in our history.

We've seen an America that was hopelessly hooked on foreign oil kick that addiction, and suddenly, we're producing solar energy and wind energy and fighting to protect our planet by reducing harmful carbon pollution.

We've seen our men and women in uniform, the best that there is, sign up to serve and meet every mission, to pursue the terrorists responsible for 9/11, get Usama bin Laden, make sure that justice was served.

We've seen a country where freedom was limited in so many places to a situation now where, in every State in this Union, you can marry the person you love.

We've increased access to Pell grants. We've seen the highest high school graduation rate in our history. We've seen the biggest jump in college enrollment in our history.

Across the board, by almost every measure, we are significantly better off now than we were 8 years ago. And part of it is because we got policies right, but part of it is because of you.

I travel across all 50 States, and I have seen what makes America great. I've seen folks working hard, starting their own businesses; teachers reaching into their own pockets to make sure kids get an education. I've seen doctors serving the poor. I've seen our brave men and women in uniform, and our brave police officers and first responders running towards danger and working to keep us safe. I've seen the patriotism of young activists speaking out to make this country better, even if it sometimes makes us uncomfortable, calling on us to live up to our highest ideals.

I see you, Americans of every party and every faith knowing we are stronger working together—whether we are young or old, or men or women, Black, White, Latino, Asian, Native American, folks with disabilities, gay, straight, it doesn't matter—all pledging allegiance to the Red, White, and Blue. That's the America I know. That's the America I love.

That's why, through all the ups and downs, I haven't been worried about this country. Because I've seen the heart and soul of the American people, and it is good, and it is decent, and it is strong, and it is resilient. And there is only one candidate in this race who I believe can continue the progress we've made. And I know that because she has devoted her life to making America better, and that is the next President of the United States, Hillary Clinton.

So I am going to work my heart out over these next 11 days. I don't know about you, but I'm not tired. I'm feeling good. I'm ready to work. And I need you to join me.

Florida, I need you to join me. Young people, I need you to join me. And you don't need to wait until November 8 to do the work, because here in Florida, you can vote early. Here in Florida, you can vote right now. And if you turn out to vote—and I want young people to listen here—hold on a second, I'm going to get quiet for a second. Everybody, hold on, hold on. I'm going to talk to young people here for a second.

If you vote, if you young people vote, if you vote for somebody who wants to make sure that college is more affordable, if you vote to make sure we're dealing with climate change instead of denying it, if you vote to make sure that we have somebody in the White House who cares about civil rights and cares about making sure everybody has a shot, if you vote, you will send Hillary to the White House—you. You. You will

send Patrick Murphy to the United States Senate. It's up to you.

And by the way, for those of you who are not young but just young at heart, don't be offended. See, I've got to speak to the young people because us old heads, we generally vote. [*Laughter*] Because we've got—you know, because we don't have enough energy to have as much fun as the young people do, so we're not as distracted, so we go to remember to vote. The young people, they've got a lot of stuff going on.

But I need you young people to vote. And by the way, the nearest early voting location for Orange County is straight down the road at Alafaya Library. The nearest Seminole County early vote location is right up the road at Oviedo Aquatic Center. And you can find other early voting locations just by going to iwillvote.com.

See, but here's the thing, everybody is—you guys are just being so sweet to me and I appreciate it, but understand this, understand this: All the progress we've made over these last 8 years goes out the window if we don't win this election. Health care for 20 million people goes away. The progress we've made on climate change goes away. All the work that we've been doing to make college more affordable goes away. I mean, the stakes could not be higher.

And I understand that right now the polls show Hillary having a lead. And—no, no, no, hold on, hold on. Hold on a minute. [*Laughter*] Hold on. You know, sometimes when you get a lead, whether it's in sports or in politics, you start feeling good. You start celebrating too early. You start getting turnovers. You start missing some free throws. Suddenly, it gets a little closer. You start tightening up. And next thing you know, you look up, and you let it slip away.

See, I don't want y'all feeling too good. I want you hustling all the way until the polls close on November 8. I don't want you taking things for granted. I want you to run through the tape. I don't want you to do an Usain Bolt and kind of look back, all smiling. [*Laughter*] Because politics isn't like track and field; you're not always as fast as Usain Bolt. You've got to stay focused and run through the tape. We cannot kick back and think that we've got this thing won, because this has been a volatile race. It's been a volatile election. Folks are in a volatile mood.

And the media stories go up and down, and there's a lot of noise, and sometimes it's hard for folks to sort out what's right and what's wrong, what's true, what's false, which is why the other guy can just say whatever he wants, right?

And so we have to work hard. And by the way, that's who Hillary is. Hillary never takes anything for granted. I have worked with Hillary. She works hard every single day. She doesn't take a day off. She is a grinder, she just keeps on working. I've seen it. I have benefited from it. I've seen her in the Situation Room, making the argument to go after bin Laden, even when it was risky.

I've seen her travel the globe over and over and over again, earning the respect of world leaders. It's not always flashy. People at home don't always see it. Folks like big speeches. Folks like sound bites. She doesn't always get the credit, but she does the work. She does the work. She understands the challenges we face. She knows what she's talking about.

And by the way, when things don't go her way, you don't see her whining. You don't see her complaining. You don't see her saying things were rigged. She just comes back and she gets up and she works harder, and she works harder, and she works harder until she gets done what she's supposed to get done.

And the reason she works so hard is because she cares. She knows about hardships, seeing her mom's history as an orphan. She knows that the decisions that you make in the Presidency are not abstractions. She knows that this isn't just about the game of politics. She knows that what we decide—what I decide and what she would decide as President—means everything to a soldier or a veteran or a military family, to a family that's trying to make ends meet, to the student who is trying to go to college for the first time, for a young person who was brought this—brought to this country as a

child and wants to contribute to the only home that she's ever known.

Hillary knows that ordinary people need a champion. And she doesn't just talk the talk, she walks the walk. She's got plans. And she's got details. And she's read them through. And she's thought them through, which is why, when she's in a debate with the other guy, she's talking about stuff that she actually knows something about and the other guy is just making stuff up.

And listen, listen. Can I just say, like, I was a good student when I was in law school and I was a good student my last 2 years in college. But when I was in high school, my first 2 years, I was one of those guys who sometimes just kind of was talking and trying to get in good with the teacher. And I was kind of charming and—but I wasn't always doing my work.

And that's okay for a while, but just like you want a surgeon who has actually studied surgery, just like you want a pilot who did their homework when it comes to flying a plane, you don't want the slacker as your President. You want somebody who is actually going to work hard and do the job. You want somebody who knows what they're talking about.

And by the way, you know who is also a hard worker is Patrick Murphy. Patrick Murphy. Unlike his opponent, Marco Rubio, Patrick actually shows up to his job. He puts you ahead of politics. He didn't try to defund Planned Parenthood. He fought to make sure women could make their own health care decisions. He didn't say that he was supportive of Florida's Latino community when—but then, when the politics got tough, you walk away from comprehensive immigration reform. Unlike his opponent, he actually believes in science and that climate change is happening.

In a recent debate, Marco Rubio didn't accept that sea levels were rising. Now, he's from Miami. [*Laughter*] So you can go to Miami and, on a sunny day, you can see a foot of water and if you want, you can put your finger in it. It's salty. [*Laughter*] It's in the middle of the road. It's a problem. But apparently, what 99 percent of scientists and what your own eyes tell you is not true, from Marco Rubio's perspective. Meanwhile, Patrick Murphy brought Democrats and Republicans together to fund Everglades restoration. He cares about the environment. And as your next Senator, he'll fight alongside Hillary to protect this planet for the next generation.

Audience members. Patrick! Patrick! Patrick!

The President. Patrick! Patrick! Patrick!

You know what, there's one other big difference between Patrick and Marco Rubio. Marco Rubio still supports Donald Trump.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo——

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Vote!

Don't—you know what, I always have to say this: Trump can't hear you boo, but he'll hear your vote. Rubio doesn't care if you boo, but he'll care if you vote.

You know what, now, for some voters——

Audience member. Mr. President!

The President. Hello!

For some voters, Marco Rubio will say, I think that what Donald Trump said is terrible. And then, in front of other voters, he'll say, well, I'm still supporting Donald Trump. You know what, you can't have it both ways here. This is as cynical as politics gets. You can't just say anything or just pretend to be anybody in order to get elected or stay elected.

If you run for office on family values, then you should have been walking away from a nominee months ago who was calling women "pigs" or "dogs" or "slobs," or graded them not on the content of their character, but on a scale of 1 to 10. You can't, with a straight face, say you respect women and then support somebody who brags about assaulting women.

You don't have to be a husband, you don't have to be a father to stand up for women. You just have to be a decent person.

And I will tell you that I know everybody has been noticing Michelle has been pretty passionate lately. You know, it's not only is this something Michelle has experienced herself, but this is something that, as parents, when we think about our daughters and listen to that kind of behavior, we say, that is not the kind of

example we set for our children, for our boys, for our girls.

Audience members. Obama! Obama! Obama!

The President. Now, obviously, I could go on and on about why I don't think that the Republican nominee is fit to hold this office, because he does it himself every time he talks or tweets or gets caught on tape.

But I will say this: In my two campaigns for President, I had very strong disagreements with John McCain. I had very strong disagreements with Mitt Romney. I believed I had better ideas than them for how to lead the country. But I was never concerned about the fate of our democracy if they had won.

And Michelle feels the same way. Michelle doesn't love politics. She wasn't thrilled about me going into politics. But she is working as hard as she can because she understands there's something more fundamental at stake than this particular election, and that is, who are we as a country, what is our character, what values do we stand for?

We cannot teach our children to treat women as objects. We want to treat—we want to teach our kids to treat everybody as full and equal citizens capable of doing anything. We can't teach our children to vilify immigrants or people with disabilities or Americans who practice a different faith. We've got to teach them that everybody counts and everybody matters and everybody is deserving of respect, and we are stronger together than we could ever be apart.

We shouldn't let our kids think that politics is about pitching a new hotel or a new golf course or a TV contract. It's about working on behalf of the common good and promoting opportunity and justice.

That's what Hillary believes. That's why she has to win this election. It's at the heart of the Methodist creed her mom instilled in her: Do all the good you can, for all the people you can, in all the ways that you can, as long as ever you can.

That's why she's in this. She believes, like I believe, that we can summon what's best in each of us; that we can make this country better for all of us. She believes that, together, we can do big things that we could never do on our own.

And isn't that what America is all about? We're a country like no other in the world. We're a country that was founded for the sake of an idea: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal," that we are endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights.

That you don't have to be born into wealth or privilege; you don't have to look a certain way; you don't have to have a certain last name. That if you are willing to give of yourself, you can move the wheel of history. That's what drove patriots to choose revolution over tyranny. That's what led GIs to liberate a continent. That's what gave women the courage to reach out for that ballot. That's what led marchers to cross a bridge in Selma. That's what led workers to organize for better wages. That is what has made America exceptional. That is why America is great.

And all that progress, all that work hasn't happened because some person from on high did it for us. It's because we did it together. It's because ordinary people worked hard. It's because immigrant families, like Devi's parents, worked the night shift. They saved and scrimped. They sacrificed. They got involved. They spoke out. And even though sometimes that progress is slow in coming, sometimes it's hard, sometimes it's frustrating, ultimately, that process of self-government moved us forward.

And that's what Hillary understands. That's what she understands. She knows that in a democracy that's big and diverse like this, you can't be demonizing each other all the time. You can't just make stuff up about each other. You can't spend all your time calling each other names. You've got to compromise sometimes, even when you're right. She understands nobody is perfect, not even Presidents. But we should try our best to conduct ourselves with just some basic homespun values: honesty, decency, generosity, big-heartedness, fairness, the things we try to teach our kids, the things most of us should have learned in kindergarten. That's what we should expect.

Look, I am here to tell you, this—and I'm just going to be honest with you—I understand that this is a polarized country right now. I understand that everybody is just rooting for their side. I understand that so much of the news during this election cycle has been discouraging or cynical. And these days, because of the nature of the Internet and social media, sometimes, it's hard to sort out what's true and what's false.

I know that so many people can feel cynical sometimes about our prospects for progress and change. And sometimes, it feels like Washington is very far away and very distant. But I'm urging all of you—and I mean this—the choice in this election is really clear. You've got one person who is really, really well qualified, who really, really cares about doing the right thing, who is committed to sustaining the work that you and I have done together over these last 8 years.

I believe Hillary Clinton will be a great President. I believe she will move this country forward. But she's going to need our help. It's not enough just to elect her and then have a Republican Congress that is already talking about not being willing to cooperate with her on anything. When they controlled the Senate and the House—right now they can't even pass their own stuff. And all we're going to see is more gridlock and more obstruction and more threats to shut down the Government and more threats to wreck the economy. They've given up on their own nominee, but they're promising more unprecedented dysfunction in Washington.

They didn't work with me when I took office, even when we were in the middle of a unprecedented crisis. They sure will not work with Hillary now. Some of them are already promising years of investigations and hearings and obstruction and repeal votes. They're already saying they might not appoint a ninth Supreme Court Justice at all. They boast about their refusal to compromise, as if that, in and of itself, is an accomplishment. And all it does is prevent what everybody is looking for, which is fixing up our roads and putting people to work and cleaning up our environment and fixing immigration, educating our kids, keeping them safe.

If you think that the slogan, "Vote for us because we're going to give you gridlock"—if you think that's a good slogan, then you should vote Republican. [*Laughter*] But I'm hoping you're not that cynical. I'm hoping you believe America can do better. If you care about creating jobs that families can live on, if you care about childcare they can afford, if you care about equal pay for equal work, if you care about raising the minimum wage, then I need you not just to vote for Hillary, but I need you to vote up and down the ticket. I need you to vote for Patrick Murphy. I need you to vote for our Members of Congress, people who are willing to roll up their sleeves and move this country forward.

So, young people, let me say this one more time. I know you may be cynical sometimes and you may be fed up with politics. I know there's a lot of crazy stuff on TV and even crazier stuff on the Internet. But you have the chance right now to reject a divisive, mean-spirited politics that would take us backwards. You have the chance right now to elect a woman—our first female President—who has spent her entire life moving this country forward. You have a chance to shape history, so don't let that chance slip away.

You've got to vote. If you've been marching for criminal justice reform, that's great, but you've got to vote for a President and a Congress who cares about reducing the pipeline from underfunded schools to overcrowded jails.

If you've been marching for the environment, I hear you, but you've got to have a President and a Congress who believe in science and will protect the progress we've made because they care about the children.

If you've been marching for immigration reform, I've heard you, but you've got to vote for a President and a Congress who doesn't consider immigrants rapists and criminals, but as people who love this country and are ready to contribute.

Whatever issue you care about, you've got to vote. This is where democracy happens. This is

not where it ends; it's where it happens, with your vote. Hillary needs your help. I need your help. America needs your help. Because your involvement is how progress is won. What you do is what's ultimately going to matter.

And if you—if you—do everything you can, not just to vote yourselves, but to get your friends out there, your family, your cousins, your uncle, your neighbors, your coworkers—if you tell them this is the moment where America has to take a stand and decide what it is that we believe in and who we are, and we're not going to succumb to cynicism, we're not going to believe in fear, and instead we're going to lift up hope—[*applause*]—if you want hope instead of fear, then you will elect Hillary Clinton as President of the United States and Patrick Murphy as Senator. And you will continue what we started 8 years ago. And America will continue on this amazing journey, this amazing journey in which every single person in this country has a chance to live out their dreams.

God bless you, Florida. God bless you—the United States of America. Let's get to work!

NOTE: The President spoke at 6 p.m. in the CFE Federal Credit Union Arena at the University of Central Florida. In his remarks, he referred to Devi Mody, student, University of Central Florida, and her parents Rajesh and Padma Mody; Usain S. Bolt, sprinter, 2016 Jamaican Olympic Team; Republican Presidential nominee Donald J. Trump; 2008 Republican Presidential nominee Sen. John S. McCain III; and 2012 Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney.

Remarks at a Halloween Party for Local Schoolchildren and Children of United States Servicemembers

October 31, 2016

The President. Happy Halloween, everybody!

Audience members. Happy Halloween!

The President. Trick or treat.

Audience members. Trick or treat.

The President. The—well, it is great to see all of you guys. Your costumes are outstanding. Young man, no selfies in the middle of me talking. [*Laughter*] The—and, Darth Vader, back up a little bit. I'm getting spooked. [*Laughter*]

The—so we just want to say to all the families, all the kids, it is great to see you guys. We hope you have a great time today. You guys all look scary or cool or whatever you're trying to be. [*Laughter*] Awesome. Many of you look awesome. And we hope you have a great time. We hope, parents, that on this day, at least, you don't have to pay attention to Michelle and healthy eating. [*Laughter*]

The First Lady. Candy for everybody.

Audience members. Yay!

The President. And in fact, the more candy, the later you eat the candy, the better. [*Laughter*] Because I think that you being up all night with a sugar rush is exactly what your parents are looking for. [*Laughter*]

All right? So we hope you guys have a great time. And to the staff who are here, thank you, guys. I'm glad you guys took a little break from all the outstanding work.

And now, my understanding is, is that we've been working on a little dance. We don't know how it's going to go, but we think we should all just try it anyway. What do you think?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Yes, don't you think?

The First Lady. I want to see what you guys have done.

The President. All right. So who's got the music? Let's cue it up. Everybody, get ready.

[*At this point, the children danced to Michael Jackson's "Thriller" as the President and Mrs. Obama watched from the stage.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:36 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Sudan
October 31, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to Sudan is to continue in effect beyond November 3, 2016.

The crisis constituted by the actions and policies of the Government of Sudan that led to the declaration of a national emergency in Executive Order 13067 of November 3, 1997, and the expansion of that emergency in Executive Order 13400 of April 26, 2006, and with respect to which additional steps were taken in Executive Order 13412 of October 13, 2006, has not been resolved. These actions and policies continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13067 with respect to Sudan.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks to an Overflow Crowd at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in Columbus, Ohio
November 1, 2016

Hello, Ohio! How you all doing? Thank you, guys. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you so much.

Thank you, everybody. So it is good to be back in Columbus, Ohio. And I'm so sorry that we can't fit everybody into the other place, but I wanted to make sure that I came by just to say thank you for everything you've done for me. Thank you for everything you've done for Michelle and the girls. Your support has meant everything to us.

But there's one last thing I need you to do, and that is make sure that my successor, the 45th President, is Hillary Clinton. Make sure mom, dad, grandpa, grandma, aunts, uncles are voting.

This one is too important to sit out. And if you care about all the progress we've made over the last 8 years, then all that progress is on the ballot even if I'm not.

So I just want to say, I love you guys. I appreciate you. Let's make sure we keep Ohio blue!

Thank you, everybody. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:23 p.m. in the Capital Center Performance Arena at Capital University. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in Columbus

November 1, 2016

The President. Hello, Columbus! O–H!

Audience members. I–O!

The President. O–H!

Audience members. I–O!

The President. Oh, it is good to be back!

Audience members. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

The President. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

Now, let me just, first of all—let me ask you a question here. What did everybody have to drink before you came in here? [*Laughter*] You guys had something caffeinated, because you seem pretty fired up! You seem like you're ready to go! You seem fired up, Ohio!

Let me begin by, first of all, thanking your outstanding Congresswoman, Joyce Beatty, for that introduction. You've got Mayors Ben Kessler and Andrew Ginther here. Your next United States Senator, Ted Strickland.

Let me ask a sensitive question for a Chicagoan: How many Cleveland Indian fans in the house? [*Laughter*] I just want you to know that you don't have to worry, because we will get you out of this auditorium before the first pitch. So you're all good. And because I've been watching the World Series, I am aware that, because Francisco Lindor stole second base in game 1, everyone in America gets a free taco at Taco Bell tomorrow. Yes! [*Laughter*] I mean, this guy was so fired up about the free taco, look at him. I have never seen anybody so excited about a free taco, this guy right here. [*Laughter*]

Now, there is a reason—the reason I'm bringing this up: If you can find the time to get a free taco, then you can find the time to go vote. If you can find the time to go to Taco Bell—[*laughter*]—you can find the time to go to iwillvote.com, find your nearest early voting location, and cast your ballot. And although election day may be 1 week away, here in Ohio, you can vote right now. [*Applause*] You can vote right now. You can vote and then go get your taco. It's like a combo meal. [*Laughter*] It's like you get something good for your soul and then you get something good for your appetite.

So I am working as hard as I can—and I'm asking you to spend the rest of this week working as hard as you can—to make sure that the next President of the United States is Hillary Rodham Clinton. Work as hard for her as you worked for me. And——

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

Now, I know you're already working hard. First of all, here at—folks at Capital University, they—I know that they are a purposeful group of young people, that young people at this university understand the stakes and they're going to make sure to vote. And all across the State, we've got this incredible organizing program. More than 63,000 volunteers have registered tens of thousands of voters. More than 6 million phone calls have been made. Yes! And thanks in part to your hard work, more than a million Ohioans have already cast their ballot.

So I know you're working. I know some of you are tired. I know some of you are thinking, maybe I need a break. [*Laughter*] But this is one week that you can't get a break, because this week will decide the future of this country that we love.

And look, I don't have to tell you, Ohio is always a battleground State. I was here so many days during my final days of both my campaigns that I would have, like, pockets full of buckeyes at the end of the day. I mean, I just—I was just parked here. And you delivered for me.

And I told you—but remember, remember what I told you at the time. I said, look, my slogan is not "Yes, I can," my slogan is "Yes, we can." I told you back then that I wasn't—I told you I wasn't a perfect man and I wouldn't be a perfect President, but I told you I would work as hard as I could every single day to make sure that your lives were a little bit better. And I've kept that promise.

I've kept that promise because I remember the conversations we had: with autoworkers who had been laid off, with folks who didn't have health care, with young people who were trying to figure out how to afford college. And over the course of these 8 years, we have battled back from what was almost a Great Depression so that now incomes are rising again and poverty is falling again. And businesses have turned job losses into 15 million new jobs. And 20 million people have health care that didn't have it before. And autoworkers are back on the job producing the best cars in the world. The uninsured rate has gone down. We're covering more than 90 percent of Americans for the first time in history.

We've kicked our addiction to foreign oil, sparked a clean energy revolution. America is a leader in fighting against climate change. We've doubled our production of clean energy. We've brought back our outstanding men and women in uniform from Afghanistan and Iraq. And we pursued Usama bin Laden until he met justice.

We've seen a country that reinvigorated the cause of civil rights. We have become a country where a freedom that was limited to just a few is now a right guaranteed to everybody: the freedom to marry who you love.

And all of this happened because of you. I mean, I was your front man—[*laughter*]—but you were the band. And all across the country, I've seen what has always made America great is its people: people working hard, people starting their own businesses, teachers reaching into their own pockets to make sure their kids had school supplies. I've seen doctors serve the poor. I've seen our men and women in uniform, our brave police officers, and first responders running towards danger to keep us safe. I've seen the patriotism of young activists speaking out for what's right, even when it's uncomfortable, part of a young generation calling us to live up to our highest ideals.

I have seen Americans of every faith and every party who know that we're stronger together—young and old, men and women, Black, White, Latino, Asian, Native American, people with disabilities—all pledging allegiance to the Red, White, and Blue. That's the America I know.

And there's only one candidate in this race who has devoted her life to a better America, and that's the next President of the United States, Hillary Clinton.

But make no mistake: This is not something you can take for granted. All the progress we've made goes out the window if we don't do our jobs in these next 7 days. Our future depends on what you do these next 7 days. And at the end of the campaign, I know there are all sorts of negative ads and there's noise and there's distractions. But I want you to tune all that out. I want you to focus on the choice that you face in this election.

Donald Trump——

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo!

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Vote! Don't boo, vote! Booing doesn't help. Voting helps.

Donald Trump is uniquely unqualified to be President. He is temperamentally unfit to be Commander in Chief. Don't take my word for it. Take the word of a lot of the Republicans who were saying this before they decided, politically, that it was convenient to support him. And then some of them decided, politically, it was inconvenient to support him again. And they keep on doing backflips.

But think about what they said at the outset: that he was a "con man," that he didn't have the temperament to do the job, that he didn't have the knowledge to do the job, didn't have the experience to do the job. Somebody who claims to be a great businessman, but who repeatedly stiffs small businesses and their—and workers out of what he owes them.

And let me say this, because I was talking to you—some folks here on the way over, and I said to them, if you're a working person, if you are out there every day working hard, punching a clock, the notion that this guy is your champion——

Audience members. No!

The President. The notion that this guy is going to fight for working people, when his entire life he did not have time for anybody who wasn't

rich or a celebrity, who wouldn't let you into one of his hotels unless you were cleaning the room, wouldn't let you onto one of his golf courses unless you were mowing the fairway—come on! This guy is going to be your champion?

Audience members. No!

The President. Come on! No, I—because there are a lot of working folks in Ohio, proud people who make an honest living. And I hear them saying, well, I don't know, Trump, maybe he's not so bad. Come on! [*Laughter*] This guy?

I mean, it would be one thing if you were thinking about voting for somebody who had been in the trenches, who knew what it was like maybe to not have enough money at the end of the month, who's—maybe had seen their parents working in a coal mine or on an assembly line and knew what it was like to not be able to afford college and had done his best—maybe you'd think about some of the stuff he's saying. But this guy? Don't be bamboozled. Don't let a—don't run for that okey-doke. Come on!

Come on! That guy didn't have a—had never worn a baseball hat or a seed hat until he started selling them to make some money. [*Laughter*] Come on. Come on, take that off. [*Laughter*] No, no, no, wait, wait, wait! Don't boo. Don't boo.

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Vote! Although, I would also check to see where that was made, because I'll bet it's made in China.

And then, this is the only candidate in decades—the only one—who refuses to release any tax returns whatsoever.

Audience members. No!

The President. Now, maybe this is because he's not as rich as he says he is. But maybe it's because—he admits—he hasn't paid his Federal income taxes in years, which he says makes him smart. But actually what it means is, after this country has given everything to you, you're not going to give a single dime back to our troops or our veterans or building roads or building bridges or to our universities so that young people can get an education. Come on!

Says he'll be his own foreign policy adviser, because he says he's got a "good brain." [*Laughter*] Who talks like that? [*Laughter*] We can't afford a President whose brain has suggested that we should torture people again or ban entire religions from our country, who insults POWs or attacks Gold Star mothers or talks down to our troops and our veterans. Even a Republican Senator said we can't afford to give the nuclear codes to somebody so erratic.

I mean, I think Hillary made a pretty good point: You—a man you can bait with a tweet is not somebody you want to trust with nuclear weapons.

So I want to, in particular, talk to working people out there who are thinking about—even thinking about working—voting for this guy. Somebody who spent 70 years on this Earth showing no regard for working people, open disdain not just for immigrants or Muslims, but Americans with disabilities. And we know what he said about women. This is the guy that you want to be representing the entire country all around the world?

Audience members. No!

The President. And by the way, by the way, this is not just one tape where he's bragging about how being famous allows him to get away with actions that qualify as sexual assault. This is a lifetime of calling women "pigs" and "dogs" and "slobs" and grading women on a 10-point scale.

And—but part of what I'm concerned about is, we start acting like this is normal. And I hear people saying, well, this is just locker-room talk. I've been in a locker—I've been in lot of locker rooms. And I—look, I'll admit you wouldn't want to publish everything said in a locker room, but that wasn't said. This is habitual. And it is a part of who he is.

And when I hear people justifying it or making excuses or saying, well, I don't like that part of his—what he says, but I support his policies, and when I hear Republican officials saying, as long as he's willing to pass our budget and our tax cuts, then we're supporting him—let me tell you something about this office. Who you are, what you are does not change once you occupy the Oval Office. It doesn't. It all—the on-

ly thing this office does is, it amplifies who you are. It magnifies who you are. It shows who you are.

If you disrespected women before you were elected, you will disrespect women once you're President. If you tolerate supporters who are Klan sympathizers before you're elected, then you'll receive their support once you're in office. If you disrespect the Constitution by threatening to shut down the press when it doesn't say things you like or threatening to throw your opponent in jail or discriminating against people of different faiths—if you do that before you are elected, then what are you going to do when you have actual power to do those things?

So don't act like this is normal. This is not your typical election. Look, we all have Republican friends. This guy with the hat actually looks like a nice guy. [*Laughter*] He's got a nice smile on his face. I—look, we all know Republican friends, family members who don't act or think the way Trump does. But the problem is, is that things have become so polarized that people start talking themselves into saying, well, maybe it's not so bad. But it is. It really is. It really is.

This is not somebody you want your kids saying is the President of the United States. Because our kids will learn from it. And you don't want somebody who really doesn't know what they're doing or show any curiosity about knowing what they're doing to hold this job.

So—but the good news is, Ohio, all of you are uniquely qualified to make sure he doesn't get that chance. All you've got to do is vote.

And these are not equal candidates. There's only one who is actually worthy of your vote, who is smart, who is steady, who is tested, whose heart is in the right place, who is probably the most qualified person ever to run for this office. And that is Hillary Clinton.

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. This—Hillary is somebody who we know has dedicated her life to making this country a stronger, better place. Works hard every single day.

Audience member. I love you, Obama!

The President. She—I love you back. But I want to talk about Hillary for a second. [*Laughter*]

I saw her as my Secretary of State. I saw her in the Situation Room, making arguments to go after bin Laden even though it was risky, tirelessly circling the globe as Secretary of State, respected around the world. Her efforts are not always flashy, and they're not always appreciated here at home, but she made me a better President, and she didn't ask for credit. And when she was challenged, she doesn't make things up on the spot. She doesn't double down on lies that obviously are lies, because there's video. [*Laughter*]

She actually understands the world. She understands the challenges we face. And when things don't go her way, she doesn't whine or complain or blame others or say everything is rigged. [*Laughter*] She doesn't say the polls are great when the polls are in her favor, and then when they don't go in her favor, the polls stink and nobody knows what they're talking about. She just works harder, and she comes back better.

And she knows that the decisions that a President makes mean whether or not somebody gets a job out there. It means whether a veteran is getting the right care or not; means whether a soldier is going to be put in harm's way or not. Knows what it means to parents trying to make ends meet; or a worker at the plant, whether that plant stays open; or a student who's trying to go to a college for the first time; or a young person who's brought to this country as a baby and now just wants to contribute to the only home she's ever known. Hillary knows they need a champion.

And she has concrete plans to do what she promises. She's thought it through. And she values hard work, and she respects working Americans. And she'll be a Commander in Chief who finishes the job of defeating ISIL. And she will be a smart and steady President of the United States.

But look, I just want to be honest with you, because she's been out there for so long, sometimes in this culture, we always want to see the new, shiny object. And if you get beat up enough in this political environment that's so

toxic, after a while people, start believing stuff. Hillary Clinton is consistently treated differently than just about any other candidate I see out there. And as I said, some of it is, she's just been around a long time and so people kind of—they just believe whatever is said by the other side in their systematic attacks. And it wears on people's attitudes. And over time, they go, well, maybe—no, no, no, do not believe that stuff.

Has she made mistakes? Of course. So have I. There's nobody in the public arena over the course of 30 years that doesn't make some. But she is a fundamentally good and decent person who knows what she's doing and will be an outstanding President.

And by the way, I just want to say it, to the guys out there—I want to be honest—you know, there's a reason why we haven't had a woman President before. And I think that sometimes we're kind of trying to get over the hump. And we have to ask ourselves as men—because I hope my daughters are going to be able to achieve anything they want to achieve, and I know that my wife is not just my equal, but my superior. That I want us—I want every man out there who's voting to kind of look inside yourself and ask yourself, well, how—if you're having problems with this stuff, how much of it is that we're just not used to it. So that, like, when a guy is ambitious and out in the public arena and working hard, well, that's okay; but when a woman suddenly does it, suddenly, you're all, like, well, why is she doing that?

I'm just being honest. I want you to think about it, because she is so much better qualified than the other guy. She has conducted herself so much better in public life than the other guy, that this notion that the—somehow, oh, you know, this is hard to choose—it shouldn't be.

And by the way, not only do we need to elect Hillary Clinton, but she's going to need allies, allies like Ted Strickland in the United States Senate. Because here's a guy who we know believes in protecting overtime pay so people get paid what they've earned, believes that workers should have the right to bargain for better pay and benefits. He's running against a guy who helped strip overtime from 6 million workers, backed a bill that would make it harder for workers to organize.

Ted has always stood for working people. In 2016, he believes that women should get equal pay for equal work. His opponent has voted against it five times. Ted supports, yes, commonsense gun safety measures like background checks and keeping assault weapons out of the hands of terrorists. His opponent blocked background checks and opposed a bill to just stop people on the terror watch list from buying a gun.

And by the way, if you see these ads out there saying Hillary is trying to take your guns away, it is not true. It is a lie. Let's just call it what it is: It's a lie. It's a lie. It's—I'm not saying it's mischaracterization. It is a lie.

And by the way, there's one more big difference between Ted Strickland and Rob Portman, and that is, Ted never supported Donald Trump. Ted's opponent was for him. Then he kind of looked at the polls and said he was against him. [*Laughter*] You don't know what he's going to do this week. But you know what, you don't get credit for that. Being a leader is about doing the right thing when it's hard, not when it's easy. It's about doing what's right even when it costs you votes.

That's one of the reasons I'm so proud of Michelle right now. She doesn't love politics. It wasn't her first choice for our family. But she's been working her heart out for Hillary. And it's because not only does she believe in Hillary, but she also knows our kids are watching this election. And when she sees the way Trump behaves, she knows that should not be an example we set for our kids. She knows there's something fundamental at stake that goes beyond plans or policies, and that's the character of our country.

Will we teach our kids to treat women as objects or as full and equal citizens capable of doing anything a man does and then some? Will we teach our kids to vilify immigrants or people with disabilities or Americans who practice different faiths, or will we say that out of many we are one, that we're stronger together than

we could ever be apart? Will we teach our kids that politics is just a way to pitch a new hotel or a golf course or a TV contract or show them that public service in this democracy is a noble calling, that it gives us a chance to promote opportunity and justice and the common good?

That's what Hillary believes in. Her Methodist creed taught her: Do all the good you can, for all the people you can, in all the ways you can, as long as ever you can. She believes that we can summon what's best in each of us and make the country a little bit better for all of us.

And that's what this election is about. We—when I think back about these 8 years of service, I can tell you honestly that as hard as this job is sometimes, as frustrating as it sometimes is, you do this job for a while and your love for this country just grows and grows. And it becomes so profound, because you—this is a place like no other. It is founded on an idea that all of us are created equal; that you don't have to be born into wealth or privilege; that you don't have to look a certain way or have a certain last name to have a chance to make a difference.

That's what drove patriots to choose revolution over tyranny. That's what led GIs like my grandfather to help liberate a continent. That's what allowed women to reach for the ballot and marchers to cross a bridge in Selma and organizers here in Ohio to organize for better wages and better working conditions. That's what makes it—America exceptional.

We've always had the opportunity to make this country great by working hard, each and every one of us. And it's not about what somebody else will do for us, it's about what we can achieve together. And sometimes, it's slow, and sometimes, it's frustrating, but this idea of self-government, that's what makes us different. But it means we've got responsibilities. It means we don't treat elections like a reality show. It means that we pay attention. It means that we try to lift up folks who actually know what they're talking about and have shown throughout their careers that they care.

And that's who Hillary is. She knows that in this democracy, in a big, diverse country like this, we don't demonize each other constantly. She knows that progress sometimes requires compromise, even when you're right, even when you're a hundred-percent right. She knows that none of us are perfect, not even Presidents, but we should try to conduct ourselves with the same honesty and decency and generosity that we try to do with our friends and our neighbors and our coworkers and our family. She knows that. And she will continue the progress that we've made these last 8 years.

But she needs our help. And she needs you not just to vote for her, but she's got to have a Republican Congress that behaves a little bit better than the Congress we've got right now. I mean, these folks don't just block my stuff. They don't just block a raise in the minimum wage. They don't just block an infrastructure bill that would put people back to work. They don't just block immigration reform. They don't just vote 60 times to take health insurance away from 60 million Americans. They can't even pass their own stuff.

All they offer is gridlock and obstruction and "no." That's all we see out of them. They threaten to shut down the Government when they don't get their way. They threaten to wreck the economy when they don't get their way. They've given up on their own nominee, but they start promising even more unprecedented gridlock in Washington before we've even had the election.

They didn't work with me even though we were in the midst of a possible Great Depression when I came into office. They're sure as heck not going to work with Hillary now. Some are already talking about years of investigations, years of hearings, more shutdowns, more obstruction, more repeal votes. Some are already saying they won't appoint a ninth Supreme Court Justice, boasting of their refusal to compromise, as if that's an accomplishment.

How does that help you? If you're a working man or woman out there, how does that help you? If you're a single mom out there trying to figure out how to pay the bills, how does that help you? If you're a student trying to finance your college education, how does that help you?

All this does is prevent what most Americans would consider actual accomplishments: fixing roads, putting people back to work, cleaning our environment, reforming immigration, educating our kids, keeping them safe. It would prevent us from getting that stuff done. That's all they're standing for right now.

So, if you think a vote for gridlock is a good vote, then you should vote Republican. But if you think America can do better, if you care about creating jobs that families can live on, childcare they can afford, equal pay for equal work, you've got to vote Democrat up and down the ticket. You've got to vote for Hillary. Vote for Ted Strickland. Because they're ready to move this country forward.

If you've been marching for criminal justice reform, that's great. But you've got to vote for a President and a Congress who actually cares about disrupting the pipeline from underfunded schools to overcrowded jails. And by the way, you need to vote for a prosecutor right here in this county that makes sure we're doing the right thing. Up and down the ballot.

If you've been marching about the environment and climate change, well, you've got to vote for a President and a Congress who actually believe in science and will continue the progress we've made to lead the world.

You've been working to raise wages, well, that's great. You've got to vote for a President and a Congress that believes in a higher minimum wage, believes in giving families help to finance a college education, believes in immigration reform. You've got to vote for a President and a Congress who sees immigrants as more than criminals and rapists, but as people who love this country just like we do.

Most of all—I'm wrapping up right now—if you believe in this country, then you cannot be cynical about it. You can't—as frustrating as these campaigns can sometimes feel, and I know they're long, they're too long—but you can't be cynical. You can—you have a chance to reject divisiveness. You have a chance to reject mean-spiritedness in our politics. You have a chance to reject those who would take us backwards and instead choose the progress that we can keep on making over the next 4 years, the next 8 years, the next 12 years.

You can elect a leader who has spent her entire life trying to move this country forward. You can elect America's first female President to be an example for our daughters and our sons.

So don't let this chance slip away. You have the chance to make history. Don't let it slip away. Don't give away your power. I have said this before: The most important office in a democracy is not the office of President; it's not the office of Senator or mayor or Congressman or county commissioner. It is the office of citizen. You—you've got the most important office. And how you treat that precious responsibility, how you treat that duty to this country, that's the measure of your patriotism.

So I'm asking you today, don't be cynical. I'm asking you just what I asked you 8 years ago. I'm not asking you to believe in my ability to bring about change, not just in Hillary's ability to bring about change or Ted Strickland's. I'm asking you to believe in you: your ability to bring about change.

And if these last 8 years have taught you anything, it's that change is possible. It's because of you autoworkers right here in Ohio went from dark factories to double shifts; that thousands of our families have health care today that didn't have it before. It's the reason that a marine can proudly serve his country and he doesn't have to hide the husband he loves.

It's the reason that the young people have gotten Pell grants who didn't get them before. It's the reason that young immigrants have been able to come out of the shadows and serve in our Armed Forces or go back to school and contribute to this country they love.

The—I'm not on the ballot this time, Ohio. But progress is on the ballot. But fairness is on the ballot. But decency is on the ballot. Justice is on the ballot. Our democracy is on the ballot. America is on the ballot. Hillary Clinton is on the ballot!

You've got to do everything you can this week not just to vote, but to get your friends, family, cousins, uncles, neighbors, cowork-

ers—you've got to tell them this is the moment where we decide who America is, what we stand for. You have to stand up, reject cynicism, reject fear, reject meanness. Choose hope! Choose hope! Choose hope! Vote! Vote! Vote!

If you do, we will elect Hillary Clinton President. We'll elect Ted Strickland Senator. And we will continue this amazing journey, and we will finish what we started and show the rest of the world why this is the greatest country on the Earth.

God bless you, Ohio. I love you! God bless the United States of America! Let's get to work!

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:34 p.m. in the Field House at Capital University. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Ben Kessler of Bexley, OH; Mayor Andrew J. Ginther of Columbus, OH; Francisco M. Lindor, shortstop, Major League Baseball's Cleveland Indians; Sen. Marco A. Rubio; and Columbus City Council President Zachary M. Klein, in his capacity as a candidate for county prosecutor in Franklin County, OH. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in Chapel Hill, North Carolina

November 2, 2016

The President. Hello, North Carolina! Hello, Tar Heels! Are you fired up? [*Applause*] Are you ready to go?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. It is good to be back in Chapel Hill. I love me some North Carolina. I do. I've said this before. I love North Carolina. I love the State. I love the people. I love the basketball. I mean, I—you know, I always say that North Carolina, that's one place where even the people who don't vote for me are nice. [*Laughter*] It's true. Just good people. Just good people.

And we've got a beautiful summer day in November. [*Laughter*] I know you guys are a little hot, so make sure everybody kind of bends their knees. Don't stand up too stiff. If anybody faints, just give them a little room. They'll be okay. Hydrate. I don't mean to sound like your mom or your dad, but—[*laughter*].

So can everybody please give Isabel a big round of applause for the wonderful introduction? We have a couple of outstanding Members of Congress here: G.K. Butterfield is here, and David Price is here. One of the finest public servants in North Carolina history, your former Governor, Jim Hunt, is in the house. Your current attorney general and your next Governor, Roy Cooper, is here. And your next United States Senator, Deborah Ross, is here. So—and you're here too. [*Laughter*] Somebody hollered, what about me? It's, like, you guys are here too. And I'm going to talk about you and how much this country is going to depend on you over these next few days.

I want to thank all the organizers who are here. I know you've helped rally tens of thousands of volunteers and registered more than 100,000 voters right here in North Carolina. And it is that grassroots work that led us to win North Carolina in 2008. And you are why we will win North Carolina in 2016.

And we've got 6 days—6 days.

Audience member. Love you, Obama!

The President. I love you too. But I've got some business I've got to do here. [*Laughter*] Huh? I'll give you a hug on the way out. But right now we've got to focus on some "bidness." Not business, but "bidness." We've got 6 days, 6 days to decide the future of this country that we love. And the good news is, you don't have to wait until election day to do the right thing. You can vote right now. If you're not registered, you have until Saturday to register and vote at any one-stop location in your county. If you don't know where to go, then go to iwillvote.com—iwillvote.com. You can find the one-stop location near you, and we can finish what we started 8 years ago.

Now, some of you, 8 years ago, were 10. You know who you are. So you may not remember exactly where we were as a country when I visited Raleigh in the final days of the 2008 campaign. We were living through two long wars; we were in the early days of the worst economic crisis in 80 years. People had lost their homes, their jobs. Their 401(k)s had crashed. Their home values were sinking.

Audience member. You fixed it!

The President. [*Laughter*] The economy was teetering on the edge of a Great Depression.

But we turned the page. We've seen America battle back. Last year, incomes rose faster than at any time since at least 1968. Poverty fell at the fastest rate since at least 1968. Businesses turned job losses into 15 million new jobs. Twenty million more people have health insurance who didn't have it before. We kicked our addiction to foreign oil, doubled our production of renewable energy, became the world's leader in fighting climate change, brought home more of our men and women in uniform, took out Usama bin Laden, made sure that in all 50 States people have the freedom to marry who they love. We did that! That's what we did over these last 8 years. That's what you helped to make happen.

And as I've traveled across all 50 States, as I've gone to big cities and small hamlets, what I have always seen is what makes America great, and that is its people. I have seen you: Americans of every faith, every race, every party, who know that we're stronger together—people young and old; men, women; gay, straight; Black, White, Latino, Asian, Native American; folks with disabilities—all pledging allegiance to the Red, White, and Blue.

That's the America I know. That's the America we love. And there's only one candidate in this race who has devoted her entire life to lifting up that better America, and that is the next President of the United States, Hillary Rodham Clinton. She's the right person. She's the right person at the right time.

But keep in mind, North Carolina, all the progress that we've made over the last 8 years, all the progress we hope to make over the next 8 years, all of that goes out the window if we don't win this election. And we don't win this election, potentially, if we don't win North Carolina.

So I hate to put a little pressure on you, but the fate of the Republic rests on your shoulders. [*Laughter*] The fate of the world is teetering, and you, North Carolina, are going to have to make sure that we push it in the right direction.

Now, I know that at the end of a campaign, you must be tired of TV commercials. There are so many negative ads, and there's so much noise, and there are so many distractions. And everything is—every day is just hysteria and over-the-top coverage. And at a certain point, there's a temptation to want to just tune it out. You kind of feel overdosed. Even those of us in politics sometimes feel like, I've had enough politics. [*Laughter*] I understand the feeling, I promise you.

But I want you to push away the noise for a second and just focus on the choice you face in this election. Because the truth is, the choice, if we put aside all the noise, all the distractions, all the hype, all the nonsense, if you push all that away, this choice actually could not be simpler, it could not be clearer. It really couldn't.

Okay, we've got somebody who fell, which is what I expected. Give them some room. Make sure they get a little water. And if the emergency medical is available, just make sure that you know that there is somebody down right here in the middle. They'll be okay. They'll be okay. It happens all the time.

Now—okay, but hold on a second, I'm still focused on "bidness." [*Laughter*] Not business, "bidness."

This choice actually is pretty clear, because the guy that the Republicans nominated—even though a bunch of them knew they shouldn't nominate him—[*laughter*]—the guy they nominated—who many of the Republicans he is running against said was a "con artist" and a know-nothing and wasn't qualified to hold this office—this guy is temperamentally unfit to be Commander in Chief, and he is not equipped to be President.

And this is not—this should not be a controversial claim. [*Laughter*] It really shouldn't. I mean, it's strange how, over time, what is crazy gets normalized and we just kind of assume, well, you know what, he said a hundred crazy things, so the hundred-and-first thing we just don't even notice.

But think about it. This is somebody who claims to be a great businessman. I know a lot of businesspeople, right here in North Carolina and all across the country, who've done really, really well without stiffing small businesses or workers out of what they owed them. We don't have a history of somebody who refuses to release any tax returns at all. And maybe it's because he's not as rich as he says he is. Maybe it's because he hasn't paid Federal income taxes in years. Now, this is something he said—this is not me making it up—he hasn't paid a dime. Not for our troops, not for our veterans, not for our great universities, not for our community colleges, not for building roads, not for maintaining our National Parks, not for any of the things that help keep America the greatest nation on Earth.

He says he'll be his own foreign policy adviser. He says he can do that because he has a "good brain." [*Laughter*] Now, that is contestable. [*Laughter*] But what I can tell you is, we can't afford a President who suggests that America should torture people or that we should ban entire religions from our country. We deserve better than a Commander in Chief who insults POWs or attacks a Gold Star mom or denigrates our troops. We have had a Republican Senator—not me, a Republican Senator—say we can't afford to give the nuclear codes to someone so erratic. Now, if a Republican Senator says that about the guy, why would we consider giving him the nuclear codes? It's like Hillary said: "A man you can bait with a tweet is not a man we can trust with nuclear weapons." You can't do it.

And yet, look, we have to acknowledge, he's got support. He's got support here in North Carolina. He's got support in other States. And part of it is, is because he's been able to convince some people that he's going to be their voice. Now, keep in mind, this is somebody who spent 70 years on this Earth showing no respect for working people. Working people weren't invited to his hotels or his golf courses unless they were the maid or mowing the fairway. I mean, this is somebody who vilifies minorities, vilifies immigrants, vilifies people of Muslim faith, makes fun of Americans with disabilities. How is that person going to be your voice? Do you want somebody to be your voice who on tape brags about how being famous allows him to get away with sexual assault?

Audience members. No!

The President. Who calls women "pigs" or "dogs" or "slobs" and grades them on a scale of 1 to 10?

Audience members. No!

The President. That is not the voice of America. That's not the better angels of our nature. And we have a choice. We can choose that, or we can choose to teach our kids that our diversity is our strength; that women are full and equal citizens capable of doing anything a man does; that our job, particularly when we have positions of authority, particularly when this country has blessed us, is to treat everybody with dignity, treat everybody with respect, to treat everybody with generosity and kindness.

We have to stop thinking that his behavior is normal, that it's within the bounds of what has, up until this point, been our normal political discourse. And you hear some folks now justifying it and making excuses. You hear some Republicans who—they know he's not qualified, but they say, well, you know what, character doesn't matter and knowing the issues doesn't matter and policy doesn't matter so long as he supports the Republican agenda.

But I have to tell you, this office, it's about who you are and what you are, and it doesn't change after you occupy the office. It just magnifies it. If you disrespect women before you are elected President, you will disrespect women when you're in office. If you accept the support of Klan sympathizers—the Klan—and hesitate when asked about that support, then you'll tolerate that support when you're in office. If you disrespect the Constitution before

you're elected President and you threaten to shut down the press when it writes stories about you that you don't like or threaten—or you threaten to throw your opponent in jail without any due process or you discriminate against people of different faiths, then imagine what you'll do when you actually have the power to violate the Constitution along those lines.

And I want to speak not just to Democrats; I want to speak to Republicans here in North Carolina as well. You know, look, I am obviously a partisan Democrat. I understand that. But we're not Democrats or Republicans first. We're Americans first. And there are certain standards of behavior that we should expect out of our leaders.

I've got Republican friends who don't think or act the way Donald Trump does. This is somebody who is uniquely unqualified. I ran against John McCain. I ran against Mitt Romney. I thought I'd be a better President, but I never thought that the Republic was at risk if they were elected. And guess what, North Carolina, the good news is, all of you are uniquely qualified to make sure this guy who is uniquely unqualified does not become President. You've just got to vote. You've just got to vote. And the nice thing is, you don't just have to vote against that guy because you've got a candidate who is actually worthy of your vote, who is smart and who is steady and who is tested, is probably the most qualified person ever to run for this office, and that is the next President of the United States, Hillary Clinton.

Here is somebody who has dedicated her life to making this country better. Think about how she got her start. While Donald Trump and his dad were being sued by the Department of Justice for denying housing to African American families—no, I'm not making this up; I mean, I'm just stating facts—at that same time, Hillary was going undercover from school to school to make sure disadvantaged kids were getting an equal shot at a good education. That tells you something about their respective values.

And Hillary hasn't stopped fighting for justice, hasn't stopped fighting for equality ever since. Her heart has always been in the right place, and she works hard every single day. I know; she worked for me. [*Laughter*]

First of all, she ran against me, and she worked really hard. [*Laughter*] And then she worked for me, and she worked really hard. And she was there in the Situation Room, and she was there in the Oval Office. And when we were making big decisions about going after bin Laden even when it was risky, when it was time for us to figure out how to win back world opinion in the wake of the Iraq war, she circled the globe tirelessly as Secretary of State, earned the respect of world leaders.

And she—you know what, she's not flashy. She's not going around spending all her time giving big stemwinders. And as a consequence, sometimes, she's underappreciated here at home. But she made me a better President. And she's an outstanding public servant. And she knows her stuff. And she understands the challenges we face. And she is tough. And when things don't go her way, she doesn't whine, and she doesn't complain. She doesn't blame others, suggesting everything is rigged. [*Laughter*]

I had a chance to meet the Tar Heels basketball teams, the men and the women. And you know, here's one thing I know: If in the middle of a game you're spending all your time arguing with the refs and starting to make excuses about how you're going to lose because the refs aren't doing the right thing, then you're a loser—[*laughter*]—and you shouldn't win.

And Hillary, she just works through whatever is in front of her. She's got grit, and she's got resilience. And if she gets knocked down, she just comes back up, and she goes back at it. And she knows, most importantly, what the decisions that a President makes means to you.

This isn't abstract stuff we're talking about here. If you're a student, whether you get a Pell grant or we're able to make sure that you don't have a mountain of debt when you get out of school, that depends on decisions that are made in part by the President. If you're a soldier, whether you get deployed to some far-off land, that is up to the Commander in Chief.

If you're a young person who was brought to this country as a child, has grown up as an

American, but maybe don't have—doesn't have the papers and now you're trying to figure out how you can contribute to this country you call home, that is something the President has influence over. Veterans, seniors, a single mom who needs some help with childcare—that's what these decisions are about. And Hillary understands that, and she knows those folks need a champion.

And she's actually got plans to help. She's actually got plans. The other guy is not a big plan guy. She's got plans. She can show you how she's going to make sure more people have early childhood education. She's going to show how young people can have more affordable college educations. And while she's executing those plans, she's also going to respect working Americans and the values we care about.

She'll be a Commander in Chief who finishes the job defeating ISIL. She will be smart, and she will be steady. And by the way, she's going to need help, and that's why I want all of you to also focus on making sure Deborah Ross is going to be a Senator right alongside her when Hillary gets elected. Because Deborah has heard your stories. She's been out there fighting for working families, making sure they get a fair shot and a great education and that seniors are secure with the retirement that they have earned. And unlike her opponent, she doesn't support Donald Trump.

I want to take a minute just to talk about Senator Burr. He and I came in together when we were in the Senate, and personally, he's a decent guy. I've got nothing wrong—nothing against Richard Burr. But when I hear him say, "There's not a separation between me and Donald Trump," that's troubling. Either he actually means it, in which case he agrees with everything Donald Trump says; that's what it says—that's what you mean when you say there's not a separation. Or he doesn't mean it, and he's just saying it to get elected. That's not good either way. [*Laughter*] You don't want a Senator who spends all his time saying: "Yes, sir, Mr. Trump. What do you want me to do, Mr. Trump?"

And lately, he's been mimicking Donald Trump. Last week, he actually joked about violence against Hillary. That's not something we do. That's not something—I tell you, if I heard a Democrat saying that, I would condemn them in a hot second. You don't talk about violence against public officials, even in a joke.

And you know, I want to acknowledge, he apologized. But the problem is, this is becoming normal. This is sort of the red meat they're throwing their audiences. And it's not normal. And it's not who North Carolina is. North Carolina is full of good and decent people and courteous people and people who are willing to cooperate with each other to try to make things better. And that's what America is about.

So let me be clear, North Carolina——

Audience member. "Bidness."

The President. "Bidness." Let me be clear. There is something more at stake in this election than just plans or policies. This is about the character of our Nation.

When Hillary was young, her mom taught her the Methodist creed: Do all the good you can, for all the people you can, in all the ways you can, as long as you ever can. That's her north star. That's what guides her. She believes in that. She believes we can summon what's best in each of us and make this country better for all of us.

That's what America is about. We are a country like no other, not because of the size of our skyscrapers or the power of our armies, but because we are a place founded for the sake of an idea: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal," endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights. We don't have to be born into wealth or privilege in this country. We don't have to practice a certain faith. We don't have to have a certain last name. We just have to be willing to contribute. We just have to be willing to put our shoulder to the wheel of history, and we can be a part of this community that we call America.

That's what drove patriots to choose revolution over tyranny. That's what led GIs to liberate a continent. That's what gave women the courage to reach for the ballot. That's what gave marchers the courage to cross a bridge in

Selma. That's what allowed workers to organize for collective bargaining and better wages. That's what made America exceptional. That's what makes America great.

In other words, America depends on you—you, all of you. America has never been about what one person says he'll do for us. I didn't say, "Yes, I can." I said, "Yes, we can." It's about what can be achieved by us, each of us, together, through that hard, slow, and, yes, sometimes frustrating work of self-government. That means all of us.

Justice Louis Brandeis once said, "The most important office in a democracy is the office of citizen." Not President, not Senator, not mayor, Congressman—citizen. That's you. And that's what Hillary is counting on. Because she understands that in a big democracy like this, a diverse country like this, it all comes down to what the people say. And she understands it doesn't work, our democracy doesn't work if we demonize each other, if we just make stuff up, if we spend all our time just trying to tear the other person down just for the sake of seeing if we can get a little more power.

She understands that issues aren't black and white, and yes, progress requires compromise, even when you're right. And she knows that none of us are perfect, not even our Presidents, but that we should try to conduct ourselves with basic honesty and decency and bigheartedness, because that's what our moms and dads taught us. And they were on to something. They understood that sometimes what life is about is pretty simple—it's, like, how do you treat people? Are you useful? Are you kind? Are you generous? Do you treat people with respect? She understands that. And Hillary will continue the progress that we've made, and she'll need allies like Deborah Ross.

Because it's not enough just to stick Hillary with a Republican Congress the way they're behaving right now. I wish they were behaving differently. I've tried. I've reached out to them. They didn't work with me when I took office, even when we were trying to save folks' jobs and prevent a depression. Even when they control the Senate and the House, they have trouble passing their own stuff. And so they just resort constantly to gridlock and obstruction and threats to shut down the Government and wreck the economy if they don't get their way. That's not how democracy works. That's not what your parents taught you. We teach even our little kids in the sandbox, well, share and cooperate and don't hit each other. [*Laughter*]

And right now, because a lot of them think that Trump will lose, they're already promising even more unprecedented dysfunction in Washington, which is pretty hard to do. [*Laughter*] They're promising years of investigations, years of hearings, more shutdowns, more obstruction. I am not making this up. It is all—take a look. This is what they're saying. More repeal votes. Some are saying they won't appoint a ninth Supreme Court Justice at all. Deborah's opponent, Senator Burr, just said—just said—that if Hillary wins, he'll do everything he can to block all Supreme Court nominations. Now, keep in mind that the reason they said they would not have a hearing or vote for my Supreme Court nomination, bucking all of American history, was because we thought the American people should decide the next Supreme Court Justice. Now they're saying, well, if they don't decide the way we want them to decide, maybe we won't even do that.

Eleven years ago, Richard Burr said a Supreme Court without nine Justices would not work. Well, what changed? [*Laughter*] What, only Republican Presidents get to nominate judges? Is that in the Constitution? I used to teach constitutional law. I've never seen that provision.

You've got some Republicans in Congress who are already suggesting they will impeach Hillary. She hasn't even been elected yet. [*Laughter*] It doesn't matter what evidence, they just—they'll find something. That's what they're saying already. How can—how does our democracy function like that?

Look, nobody likes gridlock. But let—I want to be clear about something: Gridlock is not some mysterious fog that just kind of descends on Washington. It's not like some apparition that shows up. It's not like a monster movie—oh, "Gridlock" is coming. [*Laughter*] That's not how it works. Gridlock is not happening be-

cause both sides, Democrats and Republicans, are being equally unreasonable. I mean, I know it's hard to view me as objective here, but I'm about to leave, so I just—I'm just letting you know the truth. Wait, wait, hold on, I've still got some business to do. Gridlock is what happens when Republican politicians like Richard Burr decide—not based on the merits, not based on what's good for their constituents, but based on political calculation—that they are going to oppose anything that is good for the country just because a Democrat proposes it. That's how gridlock happens. And that's essentially Richard Burr's campaign platform at this point.

And I said before, I know Richard Burr. He's actually—I used to work out with him in the gym in Senate. He's a perfectly nice guy. [*Laughter*] But what's happened is, is that they have built up this new normal in their party where he's got to say anything in order to get elected. So, if you think "Vote for gridlock" is a good slogan—[*laughter*]—then you should vote for the Republicans. [*Laughter*] But if you believe, like I believe, that America can do better; if you believe that we should be out there not trying to block each other from doing stuff, but creating jobs for families, lifting wages, childcare; if you care about equal pay for women and raising the minimum wage, then I need you to vote for Democrats up and down the ticket. I need you to vote for Hillary Clinton. I need you to vote for Deborah Ross. They're ready to roll up their sleeves and move this country forward. They don't want to look backwards, they want to go forward.

Look, I know it's easy to get cynical. There's a lot in this election season that can give you reason to be cynical. But right now I just want you to know, all of you, it's in your power to reject the divisive, mean-spirited politics that would take us backwards. That's not how it has to be. That's not how it's always been. But it's going to depend on you. You can elect a leader who has spent her entire life trying to move this country forward; our first female President who will be an example for our daughters and our sons that everybody has a chance to contribute and serve.

You have a chance to shape history. What an amazing thing that is. If Hillary wins North Carolina, she wins. And that means that when I said the fate of the Republic rests on you, I wasn't joking. [*Laughter*] But that shouldn't make you fearful, that should make you excited. It's not often when you can move the arc of history. Don't let that chance slip away. Young people here, it's not often that you know your voice will have an impact. Don't let it slip away. Don't give away your power.

Don't fall for the easy cynicism that says my vote doesn't matter or all politicians are the same. It does matter, and they're not all the same. That's what Hillary's opponent wants you to think, because they don't want you to vote. And I've got to say, he has been getting help from Republican politicians in this State who have been trying to keep you from voting. I—we're the only advance democracy on Earth that purposely tries to make it harder for people to vote.

But even within sometimes unfortunate traditions in America, what's been going on lately here in the States has been really troubling. A few years ago in North Carolina, Republicans passed a law that made it harder for African Americans to vote. That is not my opinion. Earlier this year, a Federal judge said that, based on the evidence, those who voted for these laws targeted Black voters with—and I'm quoting—"surgical precision." It was one of the worst voter suppression laws in the country. Here, in North Carolina. Not back in the 1960s, now.

Already, right now, Donald Trump is calling on his supporters to monitor "certain areas." Where are those certain areas he's talking about? They are groups that are not even making secret plans. They're just out in public saying we're going to try and suppress the African American vote on election day or the youth vote on election day.

If you think that is accidental, then I want you to think about a woman named Grace Bell Hardison.

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. [*Laughter*] Grace Bell lived in Belhaven, North Carolina, her entire life, all

100 years of her life. Just a few weeks ago, Republicans challenged her voter registration status and tried to remove her from the voter rolls. And she heard about it, and she said, "I can't vote." Hundred years old.

Now, Grace got her voter registration reinstated. And you better believe she's going to vote. But this 100-year-old woman wasn't alone in being targeted. The list of voters Republicans tried to purge was two-thirds Black and Democratic. That didn't happen by accident. It's happening in counties across this State. Now, there was a time when systematically denying Black folks the right to vote was considered normal as well.

And so, young people, I want you to listen up. And. parents, I want you to talk about this: It was not that long ago that folks had to guess the number of jellybeans in a jar or bubbles on a bar of soap or recite the Constitution in Chinese in order to vote. It wasn't that long ago when folks were beaten trying to register voters in Mississippi. It wasn't that long ago that a man named Henry Frye in Greensboro, the first African American chief justice of North Carolina's Supreme Court, was denied the right to register to vote because he had failed a so-called literacy test, after he had graduated from college. It wasn't that long ago.

Grace Bell Hardison, 100 years old, imagine what she's seen in the arc of her life. Born in a time where there were barely cars on the road, no planes in the sky. Think about everything she's seen. A great-grandmother, probably a great-great-grandmother. How are you—how are we going to let, after all she's been through, folks disrespect her like that? How are we going to betray all those who worked so hard, risked everything for the vote so that we could pull the lever? And we're not going to vote? What's our excuse?

Now, those who wanted to suppress the vote, they're going to fail. The law was struck down. Your rights have been restored. Right now there are more one-stop early vote sites in North Carolina than ever before. You can register and vote at any site in your county, as long as you do it by Saturday. It's easier to vote than ever in North Carolina. But if you don't vote, then you've done the work of those who would suppress your vote without them having to lift a finger. Come on.

Back in 2008, I won North Carolina by 14,000 votes. That's about two votes per precinct. If just two votes per precinct had gone the other way, I would have lost North Carolina. How can you say your vote doesn't count? Each of you could swing an entire precinct for Hillary if you vote. Or you could swing it for her if you don't vote. Your vote matters. Young people especially, your vote matters.

If you've been marching for criminal justice reform, that's great. But you know what, you'd better vote for a President and a Congress who actually care about disrupting the pipeline from underfunded schools to overcrowded jails. Protests aren't enough if you're not voting. You've been marching for the environment and to do something about climate change, I've heard you. But you'd better vote for the next President and Congress believing in science and who will protect the progress we've made so we can leave behind a world that we're proud of for our children.

If you want more good jobs, you want to have a higher minimum wage, you want help with respect to student loans, don't just sit there and complain. Don't just sit there in the barber shop and the beauty shop and watching the Tar Heels and say, ah, you know, politics is all messed up, but what's the score? No, no, no. You can watch the game after you vote.

And the good news is, you've got a proof point. You know it works. You know it works because so many of you voted in '08. And it's because of you that millions of people have health care today that didn't have it before. It's because of you that millions of young people are going to college that couldn't afford it before. It's because of you that a marine can serve his country without hiding the husband he loves. It's because of you that more young immigrants came out of the shadows and are serving our country.

North Carolina, I'm asking you today what I asked of you 8 years ago. I'm just asking you to believe not in my abilities to change, not even just in Hillary's ability to bring about positive

change. I'm asking you to believe in your ability to bring about change. I am not on the ballot, but I tell you what, fairness is on the ballot. Decency is on the ballot. Justice is on the ballot. Progress is on the ballot. Our democracy is on the ballot right now.

And Hillary gives you a chance to advance our democracy. But you've got to do everything you can to make sure everybody votes: your friends, your family, your cousins, your uncle, your neighbors, your coworkers. Tell them this is the moment where America stands up for our best selves. Stand up and reject cynicism. Stand up and reject fear.

Choose hope. Choose hope. Choose hope. Vote! And if you do, we will elect Hillary Clinton the next President of the United States. We will elect Deborah Ross the next Senator from the great State of North Carolina. We'll continue this amazing journey and finish what we started and remind the world why this is the greatest country on Earth.

God bless you, North Carolina. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:44 p.m. on the Michael Hooker Fields at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In his remarks, he referred to Isabel Trumbull, student, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Ghazala Khan, mother of Capt. Humayun Khan, USA, who was killed in Iraq on June 8, 2004; Sen. Marco A. Rubio; 2008 Republican Presidential nominee Sen. John S. McCain III; 2012 Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney; Supreme Court Associate Justice–designate Merrick B. Garland; and Judge Diana Gribbon Motz, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Statement on the Shootings of Police Officers in Des Moines and Urbandale, Iowa

November 2, 2016

Yesterday two police officers put on their uniforms to serve and protect the communities they loved. And early this morning, they were taken from us in shameful acts of violence.

Sergeant Anthony Beminio and Officer Justin Martin represented our best, most decent instincts as human beings: to serve our neighbors, to put ourselves in harm's way for someone else. They knew the dangers of their job. They knew the risks. Yet they chose to dedicate themselves to those values anyway. So today Michelle and I join Americans across our country in expressing our condolences and stand in solidarity with their grieving families, fellow officers, and the communities they served so honorably.

All across the country, our police officers go to work each day not knowing whether they'll come home at night. Their families live each day with the same fears. So, as Americans, we owe them our respect and gratitude for their efforts to safeguard our families and our communities. And so, as we once again mourn American police officers lost in the line of duty, we must also renew the call to match that same sense of service, that same devotion within our own lives and our own communities.

Thankfully, that's the Iowa I know well. That's what I've experienced every time I've visited Urbandale and Des Moines: good, bighearted people who look out for each other and are willing to come together across our differences. That's the spirit we all must summon now not only to heal, but to honor the service of Sergeant Beminio, Officer Martin, and all the men and women who wear the blue.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in Miami, Florida

November 3, 2016

The President. Hey! Hello, Miami! Well—thank you! Thank you!

Audience members. Obama! Obama! Obama!

The President. Thank you. Well, it is good to be back at Florida International University. This is a good-looking crowd here. [*Laughter*] Can everybody please give Gabby a huge round of applause for her great work? I want to thank—[*laughter*]—who's screaming here? [*Laughter*] I want to thank Mayor Philip Levine, who's here. I want to thank Senator Bill Nelson. I want to thank Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz. I want to thank your next State senator, Debbie Mucarsel-Powell. Your next Congressman, Joe Garcia. And your next United States Senator, Patrick Murphy.

Florida, we've got 5 more days. Five more days.

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you too. But I've got some business to do here today.

So 5 more days to decide the future of this country that we love. Now, the good news is, you don't have to wait until election day to vote.

What does that say up there? I'm sorry, I can't hear you. What does it say up here?

Audience members. Vote early!

The President. You know, I'm still not hearing it. What, what?

Audience members. Vote early!

The President. Vote early! If you are registered, you can vote right now at any early voting location. In fact, there's one just 10 minutes away at the International Mall Branch Library. Go ahead and plug this into your phones if you haven't voted. It is at 10315 NW 12th Street, in Doral. So, I mean, we're making this really simple for you. I am telling you right now where you can go vote after this rally.

Now, if you are just watching on television or you're not from around here and you're trying to figure out, well, where else could I vote? Then you go to iwillvote.com, and it will give you additional locations: iwillvote.com. If you're voting by mail, don't let that thing just sit on your coffee table or your kitchen counter, and then you forget about it, it gets mixed up with some other stuff. [*Laughter*] Send in your ballot right now so it makes it by election day. The point is, we've got work to do to finish what we started 8 years ago.

Now, I have to say that I've been going to some college campuses, and I realize that, 8 years ago, some of you were 10. [*Laughter*] Yes, see, she's all, like, "Yeah!" [*Laughter*] Now, that makes me feel a little old. But she says I look good. Okay. All right. Michelle agrees. [*Laughter*]

But I want—for those of you who maybe were a little older and might remember, in 2008, we were living through two long wars, and we were about to enter into the worst economic crisis in the last 80 years. But you know what, because of some hard work, we turned the page. America has now battled back. Last year, incomes rose faster than any time at least since 1968. Poverty fell at the fastest rate at least since 1968. We've created 15 million new jobs. Twenty million people have health insurance that didn't have it. We've kicked our addiction to foreign oil.

You know, can I just say, I was driving through North Carolina yesterday—[*applause*]—North Carolina in the house—and we passed by a gas station. And I don't have to stop usually at the gas station, because the Beast, the motorcade, they're always full. They—Service is taking care of that. But I noticed gas at $1.99. The reason I make this point is because I think in 2008 they were predicting that if Obama got elected, gas would be $6. So, sometimes, it's useful to check the tape, see what they said before. It turns out what they said was wrong. So what that means is, what they're saying now is probably also wrong. Anyway, I just wanted to do that little detour.

But in addition to——

Audience member. Thanks, Obama!

The President. [*Laughter*] Right, thanks, Obama. Two-dollars-a-gallon gas. Right.

So kicked our addiction on foreign oil, doubled our production of clean energy, have done more to battle climate change than any time in our history—we're world leaders on that. We brought home more of our men and women in uniform, took out Usama bin Laden, are systematically rolling up ISIL in Iraq. And by the way, back home, we've made sure that in all 50 States people have the freedom to marry who they love.

So there's a reason that I've got gray hair, because I've been busy. And most of all, across these 50 States as I've traveled, what I've seen is the thing that really makes America great.

Audience member. You!

The President. No, it's you. You, you.

I've seen the American people—people of every party, every faith, every race, every region—people who know we're stronger together. Young, old—young and old folks; men and women; Black, White, Latino, Asian, Native American; folks with disabilities; gay, straight folks—it doesn't matter—all of us pledging allegiance to the Red, White, and Blue. That's the America I know. That's the America we love. And there is only one candidate in this race who has devoted her life to building up that America, and that is the next President of the United States of America, Hillary Clinton.

Now, make no mistake, Florida, all the progress we've made goes out the window if we don't win this election. So we've got to work our hearts out this week. We've got to work like our future depends on it, because it actually depends on it. And listen, especially for the young people out there, I know, some of you, this is your first election where you've been paying attention. And you're out there, and you're looking at it, and you're saying, man, this is really nasty. Generally, DC is not so much of a battleground. But down here, it's just like every ad is just depressing. And there's negative ads, and there's noise, and there's distractions. And sometimes, the temptation is to tune it out, and you want to just focus on the Cubs winning the World Series. Which, by the way, even for a White Sox fan, is a pretty big deal. Because they——

Audience member. South Side!

The President. South Side! Because the Cubs have been waiting, like, 108 years. [*Laughter*] I was watching something on television, and they explained that the last time the Cubs had won, Thomas Edison was alive—[*laughter*]—and they hadn't invented sliced bread yet. [*Laughter*] So you know the expression, "This is the greatest thing since sliced bread"? This is actually, for Cubs fans, the greatest thing since sliced bread. And I want to congratulate the Chicago Cubs for an amazing season.

But it's tempting to want to not really focus on our government and our politics. But this election is critical. And the good news is, once you get past all the noise and all the distractions, and all the okey-doke, the choice could not be clearer, because Donald Trump——

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo!

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Don't boo!

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Don't boo!

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Come on, you guys know that. You already knew that. You can't boo. He can't hear you boo, but he can hear you vote. Don't boo, vote.

Donald Trump is uniquely unqualified to be President. [*Laughter*] No, I'm not joking. You laugh. I'm not joking. He is temperamentally unfit to be Commander in Chief.

Here's a guy who says he's a great businessman. But it seems like a lot of his business is built around stiffing small businesses and workers out of what he owes them, work they've done. He thinks it's cute or smart or funny to basically not pay somebody who's done work for him and say, go ahead and sue me because I've got more money than you and you can't do anything about it. It's not fair.

Here's somebody who, for decades, has refused to release any tax returns. And now maybe it's because he's not as rich as he says is, but he has admitted he does not pay Federal

income taxes for years. Not a dime. So he's not helping to support our troops or our veterans. He's not helping to build roads or build schools or help young people finance a college education because he's not putting anything in. He's taken a lot out, but hasn't put anything in.

He says that he's going to be his own foreign policy adviser. He says that's because he's got a "good brain." Now, I won't opine on the—his brain. What I can say is that anybody who suggests that America should torture people or ban entire religions from entering America or insults POWs or attacks a Gold Star mom——

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo.

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Or talks down about our troops, that's not somebody who's fit to be President.

Listen, you even have a Republican Senator saying you cannot afford to give the nuclear codes to somebody so erratic. And as Hillary points out, anybody that you can bait with a tweet is not someone you can trust with nuclear weapons. Anybody who is upset about a "Saturday Night Live" skit—[*laughter*]—you don't want in charge of nuclear weapons. No, I'm serious. This is a guy who, like, tweets they should cancel "Saturday Night Live," I don't like how Alec Baldwin's imitating me. Really? I mean, that's the thing that bothers you, and you want to be President of the United States? Come on, man. Come on. Can't do it.

Now, I think the thing—but you know what, we have to be honest. He's got support here in Florida. He's got some support around the country. No, he does. If he didn't, then I wouldn't have to go around getting everybody to vote. [*Laughter*] He's got some support.

And the most frustrating thing is, some of his support is coming from working folks. People say, well, you know, he's going to be our voice. Are you serious? This is a guy who spent 70 years, his whole life, born with a silver spoon, showing no respect for working people. He's spent a lot of time with celebrities, spends a lot of time hanging out with the really wealthy folk. But you don't see him hanging out with working people unless they're cleaning his room or mowing the fairways on his golf club. You're going to make this guy your champion if you're a working person? Come on.

Somebody who spent his life without ever showing any regard for working folks. But he has insulted minorities and immigrants and Muslims and Americans with disabilities. That's the voice you want?

Audience members. No!

The President. You want a voice who's bragging about how being famous lets you get away with what would qualify as sexual assault and calls women "pigs" and "dogs" and "slobs"? And when he pays attention to women, it's because he's grading them on a scale of 1 to 10. What kind of message are we sending if that's our voice?

I tell you what, we're going to teach our kids—I want to teach all American kids—that our diversity is our strength; that, in America, it's not about what you look like, but who you are and what you do and what your character is; that women are not just full and equal citizens, they may be a lot more capable of doing what a man can do.

But the problem is that he has said so much stuff, and our culture and our media has just gotten so reality-TV-ized. [*Laughter*] I know that's not a word. [*Laughter*] But you get my drift. It's become normal when somebody just says wacky stuff. As long as they're famous, we think it's okay. I mean, and you hear people justifying it. They're all, like, well, you know, he may be—that's just locker room talk; or I don't really like what he's saying, but as long as he supports Republican policies and he cuts taxes for the wealthy, that's what I care about—saying character doesn't matter.

Let me tell you something about this office that I've been in for 8 years. Who you are, what you are does not change after you occupy the Oval Office. All it does is magnify who you are. All it does is shine a spotlight on who you are. If you disrespected women before you were in office, you will disrespect women as President. If you accept the support of Klan sympathizers before you are President, you will accept their support after you're President. If you disrespect the Constitution before you're President

and threaten to shut down the press when it says something you don't like or threaten to throw your opponent in jail in a live Presidential debate without any regard for due process; if you discriminate against people of different faiths before you are President, then that is what you will do in office, except you will have more power to carry out the twisted notions that you had before you were in office.

So you can't make excuses for this stuff. This isn't a joke. This isn't "Survivor." This isn't "The Bachelorette." This counts. This has to do with what's going to happen in your family, in your community, to soldiers and veterans, the safety of our kids.

Listen, we—I am a strong Democrat, but I tell you what. We aren't born Democrats or Republicans. We're Americans first. And I have good friends who are Republicans. And I know they don't think this way about women. They don't think this way about Muslims. They don't think this way about immigrants. This is—what they are doing is something different entirely. It is different from what we have seen before.

And the good news is, all of you are uniquely qualified to make sure that this uniquely unqualified person does not become President. And all you've got to do is make sure that you go out there and you vote.

And the other good news is, you don't just have to vote against this guy, because you have a candidate who's actually worthy of your vote. Somebody who is smart, somebody who is steady, somebody who is tested—perhaps the most qualified person ever to run for this office—our next President, Hillary Clinton.

This is somebody who has dedicated her life to making this country better. Think about how she got her start. While Donald Trump and his developer dad were being sued by the Justice Department for denying housing to African American families, Hillary was going undercover from school to school to make sure minority kids were getting an equal shot at a good education.

She has not stopped fighting for justice, fighting for equality ever since. Her heart's always been in the right place. Works hard every single day. I know. She worked hard when she was running against me. [*Laughter*] I was worn out. She worked hard when she was working for me. She was there in the Situation Room as my Secretary of State, making the argument to go after bin Laden even when it was risky; circled the globe as Secretary of State; earned the respect of world leaders.

Her efforts weren't always flashy. They weren't always fully appreciated, which is true for a lot of the work that women do, by the way. Just want to make that observation. She made me a better President. She understands policy. She understands how the world works. She understands that this stuff that we do, the challenges we face aren't abstract. They mean something to real people.

She knows that she's got to work hard because you are out there working hard. And by the way, she doesn't whine or complain or blame others or suggest everything is rigged when things aren't going her way. She just works harder. She just comes back better. Because she knows no matter how hard things may be for her, there are a lot of people who are having an even tougher time trying to pay the bills or trying to find a job or trying to finance a college education. So she doesn't have time to whine. She just gets up and does the work.

And she knows the decisions you make as President mean something to that soldier or that veteran or our military families; that a parent who's trying to make ends meet, they need a President who cares and knows what they're doing; that a student trying to go to college for the first time needs somebody with an actual plan to help them; that a young person who was brought to this country as a child, has never known another country, is American by every standard except they don't have a piece of paper. She knows they need to have a chance to get back to this country they love.

She's got plans that will actually help these people. She's going to be a leader who actually values hard work, respects working Americans. And she will be an outstanding Commander in Chief because she's been in the room when tough decisions were made.

You worried about keeping America safe? She'll do it. Because she knows our military and knows our diplomats. She doesn't just talk about it. She doesn't play one on TV. [*Laughter*] She's been there. She will be a smart, steady President for the United States.

And the one thing I've got to remind you, though, is she's not going to do it alone. That's why we've got to have a Congress that is also focused on you. Patrick Murphy, he's got the same values Hillary does. Unlike his opponent, Marco Rubio, Patrick——

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo. What are you supposed to do?

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Come on. Unlike his opponent Marco Rubio, Patrick actually shows up to work. He puts you ahead of politics. He didn't try to defund Planned Parenthood. He didn't think that somehow some politicians should be making decisions. He said, let women make their own health care decisions. He didn't walk away from Florida's Latino community when the politics got tough. He kept on. Patrick kept on fighting for comprehensive immigration reform and a pathway to citizenship.

He actually believes in science and, as a consequence, believes climate change is a problem for the people of Florida and that we should do something about it. Patrick Murphy brought Democrats and Republicans together to fund Everglades restoration. He has a track record of caring about the environment. As your next Senator, he and Hillary will help protect this planet for our kids and help make sure that Florida is protected against some of the worst consequences of climate change. This should be a no-brainer.

And there's one other big difference between Patrick and Marco: Marco supports Donald Trump. Now, keep in mind, earlier this year, he called Donald a "dangerous con artist." He said that Donald Trump has "spent a career sticking it to working people." And then he tweeted—this is Marco Rubio—he tweeted, "Friends don't let friends vote for con artists." [*Laughter*] So guess who just voted for Donald Trump a few days ago? Marco Rubio. Obviously, he did not have good enough friends to—[*laughter*].

Listen, but this tells you something. This tells you something. Now, if you knew better when you were running against Trump, you knew he was a con artist, spent a lot of time sticking it to working people—this is what you said. I mean, I'm not making this up, right? I just want to be clear. He said this. It's quoted, taped, right? If you knew better and then you went ahead and voted for this guy anyway and supported this guy anyway, that means you are somebody who will say anything or be anything, be anybody just so you can get elected or cling to power.

And you know what, if that's the kind of person you want representing you, I guess you should vote for Marco Rubio. But if you want a Senator who will show up and work for you and has some integrity and has some consistency and will actually say what he thinks and what he means and then act on that, somebody you have confidence in, then you should vote for Patrick Murphy. I trust Patrick Murphy. I believe in Patrick Murphy. And Hillary needs Patrick Murphy in the United States Senate to make sure she gets done what she gets done.

So part of the reason that it's important to get Patrick in, part of what I want to say about this election is this is about more than just plans, policies. There's something more fundamental at stake. What's at stake is the character of our Nation. You know, when Hillary was young, her mom taught her the Methodist creed: Do all you can, for all the people you can, in all the ways that you can, for as long as you can. That's what guides her. That's her north star. She believes that we can summon the best in this country and make it better for all people, not just some. That's what America is all about, isn't it?

We're a country like no other, not because of the height of our skyscrapers, not because of the size of our military. It's because this is a place founded on an idea: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men and women are created equal; that we're all endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights. Where you don't have to be born to wealth or privi-

lege. You don't have to have a certain last name or look a certain way or do your hair a certain style. You've just got to be willing to contribute. You've just got to be willing to work. You've just got to care enough about other people and making sure everybody has got a fair shot. And if you do that—if you do that—then you're a patriot, and you can contribute to this country that you love. And you can go as far as your dreams can take you. That's what makes this place special.

That's what drove patriots to choose revolution over tyranny; to found this Nation. And that's what led GIs to liberate a continent. That's what led women to march to get the ballot. That's what led marchers to cross a bridge in Selma to win their rights. That's what allowed workers to organize for collective bargaining and better wages. That's what's made America exceptional. That's what's always made America great. We've never been about just doing for ourselves. It's been about what we can do together.

It's about what can be achieved by us, the people, together, through the hard, slow, and yes, sometimes frustrating work of self-government. That's not what Donald Trump stands for, but it is what Hillary stands for: the idea that in this big, diverse country of ours, we don't demonize each other. We reach out and try to work together. We recognize that issues aren't always black and white and sometimes you've got to compromise even when you are right. She knows none of us are perfect, but she knows that those of us who have been blessed with positions of leadership should try to conduct ourselves with the sense of decency and big-heartedness that can set an example for our kids.

And I know Hillary will do that. I know she will continue the progress we've made. And she'll need allies like Patrick, because we can't just have Hillary stuck with a Republican Congress that behaves the way they've been behaving. You know, they haven't worked with me since I've been in office. They didn't work with me when we were about to go into a Great Depression. Even now, they control the Senate and the House, and they can't pass their own stuff. [*Laughter*] They're so accustomed to just saying no, obstruction, gridlock, "we're against whatever it is the—that Obama proposes."

I will sometimes propose their own stuff, and they'll oppose it. [*Laughter*] It surprises them. I'll be, like, well, this is in your Republican handbook; this is in your talking points. I thought you all were for this. No, but you're for it now, we can't be for that. I'm sorry. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. Come on, man!

The President. Come on, man! [*Laughter*]

So they've—so apparently, they don't have much confidence in their nominee. So, instead, they're already promising more unprecedented dysfunction in Washington. Now, it's hard to promise more dysfunction, right? [*Laughter*] I mean, that's a hard thing to do. But they're promising that. They're promising "years" of investigation, "years" of hearings, "years" of shutdown, "years" of obstruction, "years" of repeal Obamacare votes.

Can I just say, by the way, let me—I'm going to take another aside. I know I'm running long, but I'm—[*applause*]. But we have given 20 million people have health insurance that didn't have it before. Twenty million people. The parade of horribles the Republicans have talked about haven't happened. Death panels, you remember that? [*Laughter*] Saying this would bankrupt the country. None of what they've said has happened. So now, after 60 votes to repeal this thing they haven't succeeded, Donald Trump said we've got to call a special session to repeal it. And he had a big press conference, and he had a couple of doctors and a nurse and Ben Carson and some people—[*laughter*]—no, no—who's an excellent neurosurgeon. He really is. I don't know what happened on the political thing, but—[*laughter*].

So they come, and they spend like an hour—"Oh, we're going to repeal Obamacare." Okay, and then what you going to do? "Well, then we're going to repeal it, and we're going to give you something great." Okay, what? "Well, something." [*Laughter*] Because premiums are going up. Well, now, it is true, premiums are going up for a handful of people who don't get tax credits—that's important. We're going to work as hard as we can to do

something about it. We would have already done it if the Republicans had helped. But keep in mind, their alternative would have been no health insurance; that's what they had before.

So I—so the reason I pointed this out was you watch the press conference and what you realized is, they've got no plan. [*Laughter*] They want to repeal because, ideologically, they're opposed to the idea of helping these 20 million people get health insurance. It's not like—they don't even have a pretense of a plan. They don't even have a semblance of a plan. There's not even a hint of a plan, not even a mote, not even a—there's no plan. [*Laughter*] Nothing. Zero. Nada. Come on!

You can't just be against something, you've got to be for something. You can't spend 8 years being against me, and now you're going to be against Hillary. But you haven't been for anything. Come on! Now you've got some of these Senators who are talking about how we won't even appoint another Supreme Court Justice. Now, we've had nine Supreme Court Justices for a really long time. And part of the reason you have nine is to break ties. And some of the same folks who just a while back said, well, we can't have hearings and vote for the guy Obama nominated because we're so close to the election, we should let the next President make the nomination. Right? That's what they said.

So now, they think Hillary might win, they say, well, we might block hers too. Wait, but I thought you said that the people were going to decide. Can I talk to the press for a second? [*Laughter*] What happened? Do we ever run back the tape? Do we ever kind of go, well, what happened? That's what they said, and now they're saying something entirely different. Come on, man! This has got to be on the level. Don't pretend like gridlock is happening because somehow Democrats and Republicans are equally obstructionist. It's just not true.

You've got some Republicans right now who are suggesting they will impeach Hillary. They don't necessarily know why, but they're just going to impeach her. [*Laughter*] Imagine if you had sitting Democratic Senators saying that about Donald Trump, before he was even elected, saying, we—he will be impeached.

But look, nobody likes gridlock. But gridlock is not something mysterious that descends like a fog on Washington. Gridlock isn't happening because both sides are doing bad things and both sides are corrupt. That's not what's going on. Gridlock happens purposely when Republican politicians like Marco Rubio decide they will do anything to oppose anything good for the country if a Democratic President proposes it. And that's now Marco Rubio's campaign platform: gridlock.

If you think "Vote for gridlock" is a good slogan, you should vote for Republicans. But if you believe America can do better, if you think we should be doing something to create jobs for working families, if you think we should be providing health care for folks who need it, if you think we should be helping single moms with childcare so they can go to the job, if you think we should have equal pay for equal work or raise the minimum wage, then you need to vote for Democrats up and down the ticket. You've got to vote for Hillary and Patrick, people who will roll up their sleeves and move this country forward.

All right. I've gone on too long.

Audience members. No!

The President. I have. I know I've gone on a little too long. I've got to—my staff is going to talk about me when I get back there. [*Laughter*] They'll say, what was going on? You're just—you're talking too long. [*Laughter*]

So let me end with this. Let's take it down for a second, because I want to make this point to young people especially. Just give me one second. Just give me one second.

You know, I know a lot of you are cynical about politics. There's a lot about this election that gives you reason to be. But I'm here to tell you, right now you have a chance to move history in a better direction. You have a chance to reject divisive politics and mean-spirited politics. You have a chance to elect a leader who has spent her entire life trying to move this country forward, the first female President, who can be an example for our sons and our daughters. You have the chance to shape histo-

ry, and I want young people to understand, those moments don't come that often.

You know, there are times where history is movable, where you can make things better or worse. This is one of those moments. And it's in your hands. This incredible power that each of you have. I know you care about a lot of issues, young people. I've heard from you. I've heard—I've seen you march for criminal justice reform. That's great. But if you care about criminal justice reform, it's not just enough to protest. You've also got to vote for a President and Congress and prosecutors who care about disrupting that pipeline of underfunded schools to overcrowded jails and make sure that the criminal justice system is accountable and fair.

I know that there are a lot of young people who care about the environment and climate change. I've heard you. But you've got to have a President and a Congress who believes in science and who cares about climate change and who will protect the progress we've made and want to leave a better planet for our kids.

If you've been working on immigration reform, I've been working too. But if we're going to finish the job, you've got to have a President and a Congress who sees in immigrants not criminals or rapists, but people who have the same dreams and aspirations and who care about this country and who want to contribute and give back to it.

My point is, your vote matters. It's because of you that 20 million people have health insurance that didn't have it. It's because of you that there are young people who got Pell grants and could go to college who couldn't before. It's because of you that a marine can serve his country without hiding the husband that he loves. It's because of you that young DREAMers have been able to come out of the shadows and are serving our country and are going to school. It's because of you that we made this progress.

So, Florida, and young people especially, I'm asking you to—the same thing I asked of you 8 years ago. I'm asking you to believe, not just in my ability to change things, one person's ability to change things even. I'm not just asking you to believe in Hillary's ability to change things. I'm asking you to believe in your ability to change things.

My—you remember my slogan wasn't "Yes, I can." It was "Yes, we can." And I'm not on the ballot this time. But fairness is on the ballot. Decency is on the ballot. Justice is on the ballot. All the progress we've made is on the ballot. Immigration reform is on the ballot. A higher minimum wage is on the ballot. Equal pay for equal work is on the ballot. Democracy is on the ballot. Hillary Clinton will move us forward if you give her a chance. And if we win Florida, we will win this election. It is in your hands.

So go out there and vote. Get your friends to vote. Get your family to vote. Get your cousins and neighbors and coworkers to vote. Tell them that this is the moment where America makes a stand about who we are and what we believe. Tell them this is the moment we reject cynicism and reject fear. This is the moment we choose hope. Choose hope. Choose hope. Choose hope.

Go out there and vote. And if you do, we will elect Hillary Clinton the next President. We'll elect Patrick Murphy the next Senator. We'll continue this amazing journey. We will finish what we started. We will show the world why America is the greatest nation on Earth. I love you guys. Bye-bye.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:18 a.m. in the FIU Arena at Florida International University. In his remarks, he referred to Maria Gabriela Pacheco Santos, director of advocacy, development, and communications, TheDream.US, who introduced the President; Mayor Philip Levine of Miami Beach, FL; former Rep. Joe Garcia; Ghazala Khan, mother of Capt. Humayun Khan, USA, who was killed in Iraq on June 8, 2004; Sen. Marco A. Rubio; actor Alec Baldwin; former Republican Presidential candidate Benjamin S. Carson, Sr.; and Supreme Court Associate Justice–designate Merrick B. Garland. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Remarks to an Overflow Crowd at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in Jacksonville, Florida
November 3, 2016

The President. Thank you. So I'm so sorry that we can't fit everybody in, but I just wanted to come by and say thank you. Thank you.

I'm proud of all of you. I'm so grateful for everything you've done to support me. Except, we've got a couple guys with the Trump—you're at the wrong rally. [*Laughter*]

Audience members. Boo!

The President. No, no, no, it's good. But I just want you—I just want everybody out there to know that I couldn't have done what we've done without you. And Hillary Clinton won't be able to do what she needs to do without you, so I need everybody to go out there and vote. We've only got 5 days left, so don't hold anything back.

And I know if you're at this rally, you probably voted. But I want to—talk to your cousins, your neighbors, your friends, your uncles, folks at the barbershop, at the beauty shop. Make sure every single person out there makes their voice heard in this critical election.

I love you, guys. Let's get to work. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:29 p.m. in the field house of the University of North Florida Arena. In his remarks, he referred to Republican Presidential nominee Donald J. Trump. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in Jacksonville
November 3, 2016

The President. Hello, Ospreys! Oh, hello, University of North Florida! It is good to be in Jacksonville! It's good to be in Duval!

Before I get started, I was taught that before I do anything else, I've got to do a swoop.

[*At this point, the President stepped back from the podium and swooped.*]

The President. Come on! I was practicing backstage. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank a couple of people.

Audience member. I love you!

The President. I love you too. I do. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank a couple people. First of all, your outstanding senior Senator, Bill Nelson, is in the house. And your next United States Senator, Patrick Murphy, is in the house.

Five days, Florida. Five days. Five days to decide the future of America. Now, the good news is, you don't have to wait 5 days, because if you're registered, you can vote right now at any early voting location. In fact, there's just—there's an early voting location just 10 minutes away at the Southeast Regional Library. I will give you the address: 10599 Deerwood Park Boulevard. You can go to iwillvote.com to find other locations. If you're voting by mail, don't let your ballot sit on your coffee table, on your kitchen table, get all mixed up with all the other stuff you've got up in there. Mail in your ballot so it makes it in by election day.

We've got to finish what we started, and in order to do that, you've got to do what? What does that say?

Audience members. Vote early!

The President. I'm sorry, what does it say?

Audience members. Vote early!

The President. I still can't hear you.

Audience members. Vote early!

The President. I like that. I heard you, pep band. I heard that pep band playing a little bit. Appreciate you, guys.

Now, you know, as I'm traveling around college campuses, I start talking about what happened 8 years ago, I realize, some of you all

were 10 years old—[*laughter*]—which makes me feel somewhat old.

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. There's one right there, huh? So, for those of you who were more focused on Nickelodeon—[*laughter*]—back in 2008, we were living through two long wars. We were in the early days of what would turn out to be the worst economic crisis in 80 years.

But we fought back, and we put in some policies that made sense. And today, we've seen that not only have we averted a Great Depression, but last year, we saw incomes rising faster than any time since 1968. We saw poverty falling at the fastest pace since 1968. We've created 15 million new jobs. Twenty million people have health insurance who didn't have it.

We've kicked our addiction to foreign oil. And by the way, back then when I was running, folks said if you elect Obama, gas is going to be $6 a gallon. I just want to point out, $2 ain't bad. Two dollars. Two. [*Laughter*]

Meanwhile, we've doubled our production of clean energy. We've become the world's leader in fighting against climate change.

On the international stage, we're in the process of taking out ISIL. We've brought our men and women home from Iraq and Afghanistan. We took out Usama bin Laden. We're more respected around the world.

We've restored the civil rights mission and voting rights in the Justice Department. We've helped to make sure that in all 50 States, people have the freedom to marry who they love. We have been busy, which is why I've got gray hair. I've been working hard.

Audience member. You look good!

The President. That's what Michelle says—[*laughter*]—says I still look good.

But you know what, none of this would have happened if it weren't for America's greatest asset, and that is you, the American people.

I've seen all of you all across 50 States. People of every faith and every party and people of every background—young, old; men, women; Black, White, Hispanic, Asian, Native American; folks with disabilities; gay, straight—all of them pledging allegiance to the Red, White, and Blue; all of them understanding that we are stronger when we are together. And I'm here to tell you, Florida, that there's only one candidate in this race who has devoted her entire life to that better America, and that is the next President of the United States, Hillary Clinton.

Now, that's the right choice. But I am also here to tell you that this will be a close race and you cannot take it for granted. Because all the progress we've made these last 8 years goes out the window if we don't win this election. So we've got to work our hearts out in the next 5 days. We have to work like our future depends on it, because you know what? Our future depends on it.

And I know that here in Florida, you're just inundated with negative ads and there's so much noise and so much distraction. And sometimes, it can be encouraging—discouraging. But I want you to tune that out, and I want you to focus on the real choice in this election, because the actual choice could not be clearer.

Donald Trump is uniquely unqualified to be President. Donald Trump is temperamentally unfit to be Commander in Chief. He claims to be a great businessman. [*Laughter*]

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo!

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Don't boo!

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Don't boo!

Audience members. Vote!

The President. He can't hear your boos, but he can hear your votes.

Now, as we were driving over here, I noticed there was a headline about Trump Towers in Toronto in Canada going bust. Opened it 4 years ago, suddenly, it's already up—belly up.

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. But—I've got some business to do here, hold on one second. Don't worry, I see you. But I've got some business to do. Hold on.

Now, what I know of really great businesspeople, they're people who build great products and provide great services, but also they treat their workers well and their contractors well. If you're somebody who's repeatedly stiffed small businesses that did work for you,

stiffed workers out of what you owed them just because you could, that's not my definition of a great businessman.

This is the only candidate in decades who's refused to show his tax returns. Now, it may be because he doesn't have as much money as he says he does. I mean, he likes bragging, but maybe he can't back it up. But it may also be because it turns out, he hasn't paid income taxes in years, which means not a dime to help support our troops; not a dime to help support our veterans; not a dime to help universities educate young people; not a dime to help rebuild our roads and our bridges and put people back to work; not a dime to do all the things that would help make America for the next generation as great as it's been for this generation.

He says he thinks that's a sign that he's a smart businessman. But if you've been given so much and you give back so little, that's not a sign of a good businessman to me. That sounds to me like somebody who doesn't deserve to be President of the United States.

Now, he says that he will be his own foreign policy adviser. [*Laughter*] He says that he can do that because he has a "good brain." [*Laughter*] That's what he said. But we can't afford a President who suggests that it's okay for America to torture people or bans entire religions from our country or insults POWs or attacks Gold Star moms or talks down to our troops. Even a Republican Senator said we can't afford to give the nuclear codes to somebody that erratic. That's a Republican. As Hillary said, a man you can bait with a tweet is not a man we can trust with nuclear weapons. Somebody who gets fired up and riled up about a "Saturday Night Live" skit—[*laughter*]—is not somebody you want to trust with nuclear weapons.

But you know the thing that really gets me is this notion that he's going to be a voice for working people. Now, what's—and look, let's face it, I mean, he's got some support right here in Florida. He's got support around the country, in some cases, from working folks. And I just want to talk to them and say, hey, guys, this—here's a guy who has spent 70 years on this Earth showing no respect for working people. He's spent all his time trying to hang out with rich people and celebrities. He's not somebody who's gone around working to make sure people's wages are higher, working to make sure that unions get a better deal on collective bargaining. He's not somebody who's spending a lot of time with folks who are struggling paycheck to paycheck, unless it's somebody cleaning in one of his buildings or somebody mowing one of his fairways.

So how can he be a champion for working people? Is that somebody who you want as your voice? Look——

Audience members. No!

The President. Do you want somebody who makes fun of people with disabilities?

Audience members. No!

The President. Or vilifies minorities or immigrants?

Audience members. No!

The President. Do you want somebody to be your voice who brags about how being famous allows him to get away with what is defined as sexual assault?

Audience members. No!

The President. And calls women "pigs" and "dogs" and "slobs" and grades them on a 1-to-10 scale?

Audience members. No!

The President. I have been blessed with two daughters who are magnificent. They are magnificent because my wife is magnificent. And we teach our kids to treat everybody with respect; that diversity is a strength; that you're measured not by putting other people down, but by how many people you can lift up. We teach our daughters that women are full and equal citizens, capable of doing anything a man does a little better. That's the lesson we impart to our children. I'll bet that's the lesson you're trying to impart to your children.

And so you hear what Mr. Trump says, and the problem is that it's been happening so frequently that we've become numb to it. We almost act like it's normal. We almost treat this like some reality TV show. You know one of those shows where they've got to bleep out every few sentences because folks are just acting crazy and saying crazy stuff and being mean

and just to manufacture some drama so you can collect more ratings? That is how we are treating this election for the most powerful office on Earth: as if it's normal. We've become numb to it. And it's not. It's not. It's not acceptable. It's not normal. You can't make an excuse for it. You can't pretend it's not happening.

And when you talk to some folks who are voting for Trump, they'll say, "Well, you know, he doesn't really mean it," or, "It's just locker-room talk." They try to justify it or excuse it. Or in some cases, they say, "Yes, that's really terrible, but as long as he supports tax cuts for the wealthy, as long as he supports my agenda, I'm going to go ahead and support him anyway."

But I want to tell you about this office that I've been in, the Presidency. I want—[*applause*]—no, no, I want you to understand. Who you are, what you are, it doesn't change after you occupy the Oval Office. It magnifies who you are. It shines a spotlight on who you are. Because you have more authority, you can act on who you are.

So, if you disrespect women before you take office, you'll disrespect women when you're in office. If you accept the support of Klan sympathizers before you're in office, you'll accept their support while in office. If you disrespect the Constitution when you're running for office and you threaten to shut down the press if they say something you don't like or you threaten in a Presidential debate to throw your opponent in jail or you discriminate against people of different faiths, then that's what you'll do in office.

And the reason I want everybody to focus on this is, you know, I'm a proud Democrat, but we—[*applause*]—no, no, hold on. We are not Democrats or Republicans first. We are children of God. We are human beings. We are Americans first. And I have good Republican friends who don't act or think the way Trump does.

When I ran in '08, I ran against John McCain and disagreed with him on a whole bunch of stuff, but I didn't fear for the Republic. I just thought I would be a better President. When I ran against Mitt Romney in 2012, I disagreed with him on all kinds of things. But although I thought I was going to be a better President, I did not think that our democracy would be injured by him taking office.

This is different. This is somebody who would do damage to our democracy, who is uniquely unqualified and shows no interest in becoming more qualified. And the good news is, Florida, all of you are uniquely qualified to make sure he doesn't get the job.

But you've got to vote. You've got to vote. And you don't have to just vote against something, you can vote for something. Because there's a candidate in this race who's actually worthy of your vote: somebody who is smart, somebody who is steady, somebody who is tested, maybe the most qualified person to ever run for this office—and that is our next President, Hillary Clinton.

Now, this is somebody who has dedicated her life to making this country better. If you think about how she got started, while Donald Trump and his developer dad were being sued by the Justice Department for denying housing to African American families, at the same time, Hillary was going undercover from school to school to make sure minority kids were getting an equal shot at a good education. And her entire life has been about fighting for justice and equality.

Her heart has always been in the right place. She works hard every single day. I know. She worked hard in 2008 when we were running against each other. [*Laughter*] And then I saw how good she was, and I said, come work with me. And she then worked as Secretary of State. She was in the Situation Room making arguments to go after bin Laden when it was risky; circling the globe again and again as Secretary of State, earning the respect of leaders around the world. She did an outstanding job.

Her efforts were not always flashy. They were not always appreciated here at home. But she did the work, and she did it well. She made me a better President. She paid her dues. She understands the world, understands the challenges we face. When things don't go her way, she doesn't pout, she doesn't whine, she

doesn't complain. She doesn't blame somebody else. She doesn't say——

Audience member. It's rigged!

The President. ——it's rigged. She just works harder, comes back stronger.

But most importantly, she knows what this job is about. This job is not about puffing yourself up. This job is about you. This job is about working for you. She knows what the decisions you make in the Oval Office mean to a single mom who's trying to figure out how to get childcare she can afford. She understands what it means to a soldier whether his family is going to get support while he's overseas. He—she understands that it means something to students who are trying to go to college for the first time and whether they're going to be able to afford it or not; that the decisions you make will affect some young person who may have been brought to this country as a tot.

This is the only country they've ever known and now just want to contribute to the only place they know. She understands that because she's been with you. She's listened to you. She's heard you. She's fought for you. She knows ordinary folks need a champion. And she's put together plans that actually help. You can go on her website. It's full of plans, full of details, full of how to pay for it. She's done her homework. And she values hard work, and she respects working families. She'll be a Commander in Chief who will finish the job of defeating ISIL. She will be a smart, and she will be steady.

And so the question is, if you've got one person who you know is not qualified and you've got another person who is eminently qualified, the only thing that's left to do is vote. [*Applause*] The only thing left to do is vote!

And by the way, when you vote, you're not just voting for President, you're also voting to make sure there are people who can help Hillary do a better job. That is why you've got to make sure that when you vote, you vote for Patrick Murphy for U.S. Senate.

Unlike his opponent Marco Rubio, Patrick actually shows up to work. He puts you ahead of politics. He didn't try to defund Planned Parenthood; he fought to make sure women can make their own health care decisions. He didn't walk away from immigration reform when the politics got tough; he fought for immigration reform and a pathway to citizenship. Unlike his opponent, he actually believes in science—[*laughter*]—believes that climate change is something we should do something about; fought to restore the Everglades; brought Democrats and Republicans together; and as your next Senator, he will work with Hillary to protect this planet for our children. And unlike Marco Rubio, he doesn't support Donald Trump.

Now, there was a time when Marco didn't sound like he supported Donald Trump. Earlier this year, he called Donald Trump "dangerous," a "con artist." Said Donald Trump had "spent a career sticking it to working people." Sounds about right. [*Laughter*] Marco Rubio tweeted, "Friends don't let friends vote for con artists." Guess who Marco Rubio just voted for a few days ago: Donald Trump. Which means he didn't have any good friends. [*Laughter*] But what it also means is, here is somebody who knows better but decided it's politically expedient to support somebody who you know is not qualified. And that is a problem.

Look, if you're looking for a Senator who will say anything or be anybody just to hang on to power or get elected, then you should vote for Marco Rubio. But if you want a Senator who's going to stand up for you and work for you and show up to work for you, you need to vote for Patrick Murphy so he can stand alongside Hillary Clinton and move this country forward.

So look, the point is, there is something more fundamental at stake in this election than just plans or policies. What's at issue is the character of this Nation. Hillary Clinton tells me that her mom taught her the Methodist creed: Do all the good you can, for all the people you can, in all the ways you can, as long as you can. And that's what she's done. That's what she's tried to live by. She believes we can summon what's best in each of us, make the country better for all of us. And that's what America is about. That's the country we love.

We are unlike any other nation not because of the size of our military or our wealth or our power. It's because this is a place founded for the sake of an idea: "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal," that we are endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights. You don't have to be born into wealth or privilege. You don't have to look a certain way or have a certain last name or practice a certain faith. If you are willing to contribute, if you are willing to work hard, if you do the right thing, you can put your shoulder to the wheel of history. You can make a difference. You can live out your dreams.

That's what drove patriots to choose revolution over tyranny. That is what led our GIs to liberate a continent. That's what gave women the courage to reach for the ballot. That's what gave marchers the courage to cross a bridge in Selma. That's what led workers to organize for collective bargaining and better wages. That's what makes America exceptional. That's what's always made America great.

And America has never been about what somebody from on high will do for you. It's not about electing a dictator or an emperor or a king. It's about what we can do together, what's achieved by us together. It's about self-government. And Hillary understands that.

She knows this is a big country, a diverse country. And it doesn't work if we demonize each other all the time. She knows issues aren't always black and white and that progress requires compromise even when you're right. She knows that none of us are perfect, not even Presidents, but we should try to conduct ourselves with a sense of decency and propriety and bigheartedness, because our kids are paying attention.

So I have confidence that Hillary will continue the progress we've made. She will need allies like Patrick Murphy. It's not enough to elect Hillary and stick her with a Republican Congress that's—behaves the way they've been behaving. I mean, they decided not to work with me even when we were about to plunge into a depression, even when we were trying to save the auto industry, save people's jobs. They just said no because they thought, that way, it might help us in the midterm election.

They kept on doing it. Didn't matter if what we did turned out to be right. You haven't heard a Republican say: "Man, Mr. President, thank you for saving the auto industry. We were—you were right. [*Laughter*] You haven't heard them say, "You know, we should work together to build on what you did with Obamacare, but we're glad 20 million people got health care." You don't hear them say that. Why is that?

They—look, the problem is—and some of them are decent people, but they feel as if they have to do this in order to get power and that's all they're thinking about. So they are willing to engage in any kind of obstruction and gridlock, almost bringing down the world financial system if it helps them get elected; wrecking the economy when they can't get their way. That's not patriotism. That is not service.

And now that it looks like maybe their nominee might lose—as long as you vote—they are already promising even more unprecedented dysfunction in Washington. Some of them have already said, we're going to engage in years of investigations, years of hearings, shutdowns, obstruction, more repeal votes.

Some are saying, we won't appoint a ninth Supreme Court Justice. Remember, I nominated what many consider to be the most qualified guy to ever sit on the Supreme Court. He has now waited longer than any other nominee of either party to just get a hearing. Hasn't even gotten a hearing, has not gotten a vote. When you ask them, why would you do that? Why would you break hundreds of years of precedent? Why would you suddenly change the rules midstream?

They say: "Well, we think the next President should make it; it's an election year. We think the next President should make—the people should have a say."

Okay. So now though you are saying that if Hillary wins, it doesn't matter what the people say, we may not give him a vote anyway. That ain't right. Not only is it not right, but it also ain't right. [*Laughter*] It's also ain't right.

I just want some consistency. If you say that we should be tougher on the Russians, then how do you nominate a guy who admires Putin?

Look, gridlock does not come because Democrats and Republicans are equally obstructionists. I mean, Democrats have their flaws, I promise you. I know them. [*Laughter*] Just like I've got my flaws. I understand, we've all got blind spots. But generally speaking, Democrats have consistently tried to work with the other side and do reasonable things and just make the Government work.

And gridlock is not some fog that comes down and just mysteriously happens. It happens because Republican politicians like Marco Rubio decide they will oppose anything that is good for the country if a Democrat proposes it. In fact, sometimes, I propose things that are in their platform—[*laughter*]—just to see what they'll do. [*Laughter*] And they'll say no. And I'll say, "But you just proposed this." "Don't matter. We can't do it now because you proposed it." [*Laughter*] "In fact, it's your fault we can't support it because you supported it, even though we said we wanted to do it." [*Laughter*] Come on, man. Come on. Come on, man. Come on.

So, if you think voting for gridlock makes sense, then you should vote for Republicans. But I think we can do better. I think we can create more jobs. I think we can raise wages even further. I think we can help families who right now have trouble affording childcare. I think we can raise the minimum wage. I think we can make sure there's equal pay for equal work. And if you believe in that, then you've got to vote Democrat up and down the ticket. You've got to vote for Hillary Clinton, you've got to vote for Patrick Murphy, people who will move the country forward.

I know—last point, young people, I want to listen—I want you to listen here, because you were 10 when I first ran. [*Laughter*] So I just want to go back. I want to do a little bit of a reminder.

I know that a lot of you may feel cynical. There's a lot in this election that can make you feel discouraged. But I've traveled this great Nation of ours, and I have met people from every walk of life, every region. The American people are good people. They're a decent people. They're a hard-working and resilient people. They're an innovative people. And we just have to make sure our politics reflects that.

And right now, young people, you have this opportunity that doesn't come around all the time where history can move. You can bend the arc of history in a better direction. You can reject divisiveness. You can reject mean-spiritedness. We don't have to go backwards. We can go forward. You can elect a leader who has spent her entire life moving the country forward. You can elect our first female President to send a message to our daughters and our sons.

You have this precious chance to shape history. Don't let it slip away. I know because I've met so many young people, you are full of idealism. You want to make changes, but sometimes, you think that there's a way to do it and not be involved in politics. But I'm telling you right now, it is great if you've marched for criminal justice reform, but you've got to vote for a President and a Congress and State's attorneys and prosecutors who actually care about disrupting the pipeline from underfunded schools to overcrowded jails.

I know a lot of young people care about the environment, but you've got to vote for a President and a Congress who actually believe that climate change is real and will build on the progress we've made to leave our children a better world.

If you've been marching for immigration reform, I hear you. But you've got to vote for a President and a Congress who doesn't just see immigrants as criminals or rapists, but see them as people who love this country and are trying to do right by their families.

If you care about making sure that 20 million people keep their health care, then your vote matters. If you care that a marine today can serve his country and not hide the husband he loves, then you've got to be able to show that at ballot booth. If you care that that young person is able to afford college and become a doctor or a lawyer even though he comes from

a family where nobody went to college before, you've got to make your voice heard.

So I'm asking of you today what I asked of you 8 years ago. Remember, my slogan was not "Yes, I can."

Audience members. Yes, we can!

The President. My slogan was "Yes, we can." I'm not asking you to believe just in my ability to bring about change. I'm not asking you just to believe in Hillary's ability to bring about change. I'm asking you to believe in your ability to bring about change.

I'm not on the ballot. I'm not on this ballot. But everything we've done these last 8 years is on the ballot. Twenty million people having health insurance is on the ballot. Increased Pell grants are on the ballot. Fairness is on the ballot. Decency is on the ballot. Justice is on the ballot. Democracy is on the ballot. And Hillary Clinton will advance these things, and Patrick Murphy will advance these things, if you give them a chance.

So you've got to do everything you can this week. I know if you're here, you probably voted. That means you've got to get your friends to vote. You've got to get your family to vote. You've got to talk to Cousin Pookie. [*Laughter*] You've got to talk to Uncle Jimmy who's sitting on the couch, you know, and he's watching the World Series reruns. And that's cool. Nothing wrong with that. But you tell him, take 15, 20 minutes out, let's go vote.

You've got to reach out to your coworkers. You've got to talk to your neighbors, and you have to tell them this is the moment where America decides what it believes in. Do we believe in fear?

Audience members. No!

The President. Or do we believe in hope?

Audience members. Hope!

The President. Do we believe in cynicism?

Audience members. No!

The President. Or do we believe in hope?

Audience members. Hope!

The President. We have a chance to choose hope.

Audience members. Hope!

The President. Choose hope.

Audience members. Hope!

The President. Choose hope.

Audience members. Hope!

The President. Choose hope.

Audience members. Hope!

The President. Choose hope.

Audience members. Hope!

The President. Choose hope.

Audience members. Hope!

The President. But you've got to vote! And if you do, we will elect Hillary Clinton. We'll elect Patrick Murphy. We'll continue on this amazing journey. We'll finish what we started. We'll show the world why America is the greatest nation on Earth.

I love you, Florida. Let's go!

NOTE: The President spoke at 4 p.m. at the University of North Florida Arena. In his remarks, he referred to Sen. Marco A. Rubio; 2008 Republican Presidential nominee Sen. John S. McCain III; 2012 Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney; Supreme Court Associate Justice–designate Merrick B. Garland; and President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of National Emergency With Respect to Iran

November 3, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary

date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12170 of November 14, 1979, is to continue in effect beyond November 14, 2016.

Our relations with Iran have not yet returned to normal, and the process of implementing the agreements with Iran, dated January 19, 1981, is still under way. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12170 with respect to Iran.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks to an Overflow Crowd at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in Fayetteville, North Carolina
November 4, 2016

Hello, everybody! It's good to see you! It's good to see you. Thank you, everybody. Thank you!

So, listen, listen, it is good to be back in North Carolina. And I'm sorry that we can't fit everybody in, but the fire marshals had to cut things off. But I just want to let everybody know, number one, I love you guys and I'm so grateful. I'm so grateful for all the support that you've shown me and Michelle and Sasha and Malia. We're so appreciative of the prayers you've given us these last 8 years. I could not have won North Carolina in '08 without you.

And the fact of the matter is that we only won by about two votes per precinct here in North Carolina. So, if anybody tells you your vote doesn't matter, they're lying to you. Your vote matters. And what I'm asking you to do—and I know you'll have a chance to hear what I've got to say in a second—but what I'm asking you to do is just make sure that everybody you know is going out to vote.

You can still early vote, you can still one-stop vote here in North Carolina. I need you not just to vote yourselves, I need you to go out and just nag the heck out of folks who are not voting. And I need you to tell them that Barack, personally, is asking them to vote so that we can make sure that all the progress we've made over these last 8 years is continued, because I can tell you that the alternative is not good.

But Hillary Clinton is not only one of the most qualified people ever to run for the Presidency, but she is going to continue the work that we have done over these last 8 years. And you, North Carolina, can decide this election by making sure everybody votes.

So do not get weary. Don't get complacent. Don't get discouraged. Just go out there and do the work. Just go out there and do the work. And you know I'm working pretty hard. You know, I'm not on the ballot, but justice is on the ballot, and equality is on the ballot. And jobs and childcare and help for young people with student loans, all that is on the ballot.

So get out there and get to work. And if you deliver North Carolina for me, that is the best sendoff you could ever give me and Michelle.

Love you, guys. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:53 p.m. in the parking lot of the Felton J. Capel Arena at Fayetteville State University. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in Fayetteville

November 4, 2016

The President. Hello, Broncos! Oh, it is good to be back in North Carolina! I'm spending a lot of time in North Carolina. It's good to be at Fayetteville State University! Are you fired up?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Are you ready to go?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Can everybody please give Donovan a big round of applause for that great introduction? Few other people I want to thank, a couple friends of mine. Number one, your next attorney general, Josh Stein. Your next North Carolina Supreme Court associate justice, Judge Mike Morgan. Your next Lieutenant Governor, Linda Coleman. Your next Governor, Roy Cooper. Your next United States Senator, Deborah Ross.

Four days, North Carolina. Four days.

Audience member. We're ready!

The President. Are you ready?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. We've got 4 days to decide the future of this country.

Now I'm going to invite those of you with seats to go ahead and sit down, because I'm going to talk for a while. I've got some things to say. We've got some business to do. I want you to settle in here because I just want to—I want us to focus.

We've got 4 days to decide the future of this country. The good news is, you actually don't have to wait till election day to vote. You, here in North Carolina, can vote right now. If you are not registered, you have until tomorrow to register and vote at any one-stop location in your county. And there is one less than half a mile from here, at the Smith Recreation Center. It is very close by. Half a mile, that's like a 15-minute walk. That's across the street. It's—you just have to cross the street and you can vote.

There are volunteers here who will get you there. If you—see these folks, they will walk you over there if you don't know how to cross the street. [*Laughter*] You've got no excuse. And to find other one-stop locations near you, you can go to iwillvote.com. I need you to vote. America needs you to vote, because we have to finish what we started 8 years ago.

Now, think about where we were when I visited Fayetteville in the final days of the 2008 campaign. First of all, some of you all don't remember because you were like 8. [*Laughter*] So I am now feeling a little old, because there are college students who were watching Nickelodeon and not really focused on the election. So I need to remind you what was going on.

We were living through two long wars. We were about to enter into the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. Eight years later, because of the hard work of the American people, we've turned the page. Today, an America that was on the edge of depression has battled back.

Last year, incomes rose faster than any time since 1968. Poverty fell faster than any time since 1968. Businesses have created 15½ million new jobs. The unemployment rate is 4.9 percent, a 9-year low. Twenty million Americans have health care that didn't have it before.

We kicked our addiction to foreign oil, and by the way, gas prices are two bucks a gallon. Back in '08, the folks who were running against me said you elect Obama it's going to be $6. It's $2. You notice, by the way, they don't say, oh, we were wrong, thank you, Obama. [*Laughter*] They don't say that. But I thought—I just thought I'd stick that in there to remind you—$2 a gallon.

Meanwhile, we've doubled our production of renewable energy. We've become the world leader in fighting climate change. We've brought home more of our men and women in uniform, including many of the proud servicemembers who had to travel out of Fort Bragg to go into harm's way. We took out Usama bin Laden. We've got ISIL on the run. We're more respected around the world than we were when I came in.

Meanwhile, here at home, high school graduation rates at an alltime high; college graduation, alltime high. Millions of young people are able to get Pell grants who weren't getting them before.

We've made sure that we reinvigorated the voting rights division of the Justice Department, working on criminal justice reform. Made sure that in all 50 States, people have the freedom to marry who they love.

And it's been hard work. And there have been times where we've had setbacks, and there have been times where some of you may have felt discouraged. But I tell you why I didn't get discouraged. I didn't get discouraged because of you. I didn't get discouraged because over these 8 years, I traveled across all 50 States. I went to big cities. I went to small towns. I went to suburbs and rural areas. I met people from every background and every faith and every party, and I saw what makes America great: I saw you. I saw you. And I saw you working together in neighborhoods and in your towns, in your cities, in your churches, in your congregations.

I saw young and old, men and women, Black, White, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, people with disabilities, gay and straight, all pledging allegiance to the Red, White, and Blue. That's the America I know.

And there is only one candidate in this race in 2016 who has devoted her life to helping to build that better America, and that's the next President of the United States, Hillary Rodham Clinton.

But we can't take it for granted. We can't be complacent. All the progress that we've made these last 8 years goes out the window if we don't win this election. So we've got to work our hearts out this week, these last 4 days, as if our future depends on it, because our future depends on it.

And I know sometimes at the end of campaigns, there are so many negative ads on TV, there is so much noise, so much distraction, a lot of okey-doke out there. [*Laughter*] They want to bamboozle you. [*Laughter*] I want you to tune all that out, and I want you to focus on the choice that we actually face in this election. Because if you just focus, if you just think about it, the choice could not be simpler, it could not be clearer.

There is a reason that so many Republicans, so many conservatives have denounced the nominee of their party. It's never happened before. You've never seen a situation in which folks are denouncing the person who's nominated as their party leader. And it's because Donald Trump is uniquely unqualified to be President. He is temperamentally unfit to be Commander in Chief.

Listen, if you want to keep our military the greatest fighting force that the world has ever known, if you want America to stay strong and respected, then we can't have a Commander in Chief who suggests that it's okay to torture people, that suggests that we should ban entire religions from our country.

We can't afford a Commander in Chief who insults POWs or attacks——

[*At this point, there was a disruption in the audience.*]

The President. No, wait, wait, wait. Hold up. Hold up. Hold up. Hey, hold up! Hold up! Hold up! No, it's okay. Hey! Hold up! Hold up! Hold up!

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. Hey, listen, listen, listen——

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. Hey, hey, hey, listen up! Hey, everybody! Everybody! Hey! Hey! Listen up! Hey! I told you to be focused, and you're not focused right now! Listen to what I'm saying. Hold up! Hold up! Hold up! Everybody sit down and be quiet for a second. Everybody sit down and be quiet for a second.

Now, listen up! I'm serious, listen up. You've got an older gentleman who is supporting his candidate. He's not doing nothing. You don't have to worry about him. You should—this is what I mean about folks not being focused.

First of all, we—hold up! Hold up! First of all, we live in a country that respects free speech. So, second of all, it looks like maybe he might have served in our military, and we've got to respect that. Third of all, he was elderly,

and we've got to respect our elders. And fourth of all, don't boo.

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Vote! Don't boo, vote! Come on.

Now, I want you to pay attention. Because if we don't—if we lose focus, we could have problems. This is part of what's happened here during this election season. We just get stirred up for all kinds of reasons that are unnecessary. Just relax. [*Laughter*]

Now, I want to remind you what I was saying. We can't afford a Commander in Chief who insults POWs, who attacks a Gold Star mother, who actually talks down our troops, says he knows more than our generals. Even a Republican Senator said we can't afford to give somebody like that the nuclear codes, somebody so erratic. I want you to think about that.

When I was sworn in as President, the next day I'm sitting down—actually not the next day, that, just right afterwards—I had to sit down with somebody who explained this whole nuclear thing. It will sober you up. [*Laughter*] It's serious business. We can't have somebody like that handling our nuclear codes. We can't have somebody who gets upset because "Saturday Night Live" does a skit about him—[*laughter*]—and starts tweeting at 3 o'clock in the morning. That's not the temperament that you want for somebody who has got the nuclear codes.

So, if you believe that America is stronger when everybody does their part, if you believe that America is stronger when everyone pays their fair share, then we can't elect the first candidate in decades who refuses to release any tax returns, admits he has not paid Federal income tax in years; somebody who stiffs small businesspeople who do work for him or workers who've done work for him and he owes them.

But he says, I won't pay you because, you know what, I've got more lawyers than you. The notion that somebody like that is going to be the champion of working people—somebody who exploits working people, somebody who probably doesn't know any working people except the person who cleans up and the person who mows the fairway at his golf course—how can that person be a champion for working people?

If you cherish our Constitution, we can't elect a President who threatens to shut down the press when they say something he doesn't like; who threatens to throw his opponents in jail; who discriminates against people of different faiths. Our Constitution does not allow that. There are places around the world where that's acceptable, but that's not the United States of America.

If you believe we're stronger together, then we can't elect a President who vilifies minorities, mocks Americans with disabilities, calls immigrants criminals and rapists. We can't elect a President who brags that being famous allows him to get away with something that, if you read the description, qualifies as sexual assault; who calls women "pigs" and "dogs" and "slobs," and grades them on a scale of 1 to 10. That's not America. This is not a Democrat or a Republican. That's not America.

Michelle and I, we've got two magnificent daughters. And they are primarily magnificent because Michelle is magnificent. And they're smart, and they're cute, just like their mama. But the thing I'm so proud of them is that they're kind and they're generous. And we've taught them to respect everybody; that nobody is higher than you, but nobody is lower than you, and you don't lift yourself up by putting somebody else down. Those values that we've taught our children, that you're teaching your children and your grandchildren, we can't have a President who every day seems to violate those basic values.

And the problem is, is that he's done it so much that it's become almost normal. It's like suddenly reality TV has entered into the race for the Presidency. It's not even "Survivor" or "The Bachelorette." I mean, it's like some "Love and Hip Hop" stuff. [*Laughter*] I mean, it's just—some stuff that, up until this election, we would have said is completely disqualifying. And yet, somehow, everybody has gotten accustomed to it, acting like it's normal.

And we hear people justifying it and making excuses about it and saying, "Well, you know, he didn't really mean it," or, "It's locker room

talk," or, "Well, maybe he did mean it, but as long as he supports tax cuts for the rich or as long as he supports doing the things we want to do, then it's okay." Come on, man. That—we can't be thinking somehow that just because he agrees with you on some policy issue, or just because you're frustrated with Government, that it's okay to display the kind of behavior he displays.

Because I want to tell you something about this office that I've been in for 8 years: Who you are, what you are does not change once you become President. It will magnify who you are. You have more power so as a consequence, folks will enable you to be more who you are. It will shine a spotlight on who you are.

But if you disrespected women before you were in office, then you will disrespect women once you take office. If you accept the support of Klan sympathizers, if you don't denounce them right away because you're kind of not sure, well, that's what you're going to do when you're in office. If you disrespect the Constitution when you're running for President, then not only will you disrespect it once you become President, but you actually might be able to violate the Constitution once you're President.

And the reason I say all this is because, yes, I am a proud Democrat, but we're not Democrats or Republicans first. We're children of God first. We are Americans first. We are human beings first. I've got Republican friends who don't think or act the way Donald Trump is acting, and as a consequence, they're not voting for him, even if they disagree with Democratic policies. This is somebody different, uniquely unqualified to do the job.

But the good news is, North Carolina, all of you are uniquely qualified to make sure he doesn't get the job. You just have to vote. You just have to vote. And the good news is you don't have to just vote against somebody, you can vote for somebody. Because there is somebody who's smart, and who's steady, and who's tested; somebody who I believe is as qualified as any person ever to run for this office. She is my friend. I trust her. She will be an outstanding President. And her name is Hillary Clinton, and I need you to vote for her.

This is somebody who has dedicated her life to making this country better. Think about how she got started. At the same time, Donald Trump and his developer father were being sued by the Justice Department for denying housing to African American families, Hillary was going undercover from school to school to make sure minority kids were getting an equal shot at a good education. That's who she is. That's her values. And she has not stopped fighting for justice and equality ever since.

Her heart has always been in the right place. But it's not just her heart. She's smart. She does her homework. She works hard every single day. I know. She worked hard when she was running against me. [*Laughter*] Then I said, boy, that woman worked so hard, I need her to work for me. [*Laughter*] And I saw up close her outstanding work. She was in the Situation Room making arguments to go after bin Laden when it was a risky proposition. She circled the globe again and again as Secretary of State, earned the respect of world leaders.

She was outstanding in her job. She was loyal to me. Her efforts were not flashy. They weren't always fully appreciated. That happens sometimes to women. You know, you go up into some church here in Fayetteville, tell you, look who's doing the work. They're not always out front, but you know who's doing the work.

She made me a better President. She actually understands the world, understands the challenges we face; doesn't have to have somebody explain to her the difference between a Sunni and a Shia. [*Laughter*] Doesn't have to have somebody explain the difference between Ukraine and Lithuania. [*Laughter*] She can find them on a map.

And by the way, when things don't go her way, she doesn't whine. She doesn't complain. She doesn't blame somebody else. She doesn't say the game is rigged. She just works harder, comes back stronger. Gets up when she gets knocked down, dusts herself off, keeps on going. She will be a smart and a steady President.

And by the way, Deborah Ross will be the same kind of Senator if you give her the

chance. She has heard your stories. She has fought on behalf of working families, and she'll keep fighting so they get a fair shot, so kids get a great education, so seniors get the secure retirement they've earned. And by the way, unlike her opponent, she doesn't support Donald Trump.

She's running against Senator Richard Burr. Now, I know Richard Burr. He and I came into the Senate together. And we worked out sometimes at the gym. We'd be there at the same time. He's a perfectly nice guy to talk to. But he seems to be willing to say anything just to get elected.

So he said the other day, "There is not a separation between me and Donald Trump." Now, that's a problem. So either he's telling the truth, and that's a problem, or he's just saying it because he thinks it will help him get elected. That's still a problem. [*Laughter*]

And he started to—he's been starting to adopt some of the habits of Donald Trump, like he actually joked about violence against Hillary. We've been hearing a lot of that lately, just some loose talk that's dangerous. He apologized, but the problem is, is that the fact that he said it in the first place means that he has become part of this whole kind of reality TV, say anything, do anything, insult anybody, whatever-it-takes-to-get-elected kind of attitude. And you know what, that's not what North Carolina is about.

Audience members. No!

The President. That's what—that's not what America is about. I always say, when I come to North Carolina, the thing I love about North Carolina, even the folks who don't vote for me are nice. [*Laughter*] Because folks got some good home training. You don't go around making jokes like that.

So the bottom line is, is that Deborah needs to get elected right alongside of Hillary. Because for Hillary to continue to make the progress that we've made, she's got to have allies like Deborah Ross in the Senate. You cannot elect Hillary and then stick her with the kind of Congress that's behaving the way they've been behaving.

They did not work with me when I took office, even though we were in the middle of a great recession, would not lift a finger. They decided it's better for our politics just to say no. And now they're promising more dysfunction. I don't know how you could have more dysfunction than you've got right now out of them, but they're promising more. They're going to try to come up with something. So they're already saying, we're going to have years of hearings and investigations of Hillary. We're going to have more shutdowns, more obstruction, more repeal votes of the health care act.

Audience member. Wasting our tax dollars!

The President. Wasting our tax dollars. Who said that? That's what you said?

Richard Burr, Deborah's opponent, said that if Hillary wins, he will do everything he can to block all Supreme Court nominations. Now, keep in mind, 11 years ago, he said a Supreme Court without nine Justices wouldn't work. Well, what changed? Only Republican Presidents get to nominate judges now?

Some Republicans are suggesting that they might start impeachment hearings against Hillary. She's not even elected yet. Come on. You can't do that. That ain't right. Not only is it not right, but it ain't right!

Listen, listen, gridlock—you hear a lot about gridlock. Gridlock is not some mysterious fog that just kind of drops down on Washington. Gridlock is not the Democrats and the Republicans just both being equally unreasonable. Gridlock is happening, has happened, will happen when Republican politicians like Richard Burr decide they will oppose anything that's good for the country just because a Democrat proposes it.

So, if you think "Endless gridlock" is a good slogan, then you should vote for Richard Burr. You should vote for Republicans. But if you believe America can do better, if you care about creating jobs for families here in Fayetteville, if you think that we should help a single mom get affordable childcare so she can go to work, if you think women should be paid the same as men for doing the same job, if you think we should be able to raise the minimum

wage so working people get a fair shake, if you think that people who are working hard deserve respect, then you've got to vote for the Democrat up and down the ticket. You've got to vote for Hillary. You've got to vote for Deborah Ross. You've got to vote for Roy Cooper. You've got to vote for people who put you ahead of politics and are ready to move the country forward.

So, North Carolina, let me close by saying——

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you too. But let me—I do. You know I do. But let me finish up by just saying this.

Audience member. We love you.

The President. I do too.

But listen, there is something—hold on a second. There is something more fundamental at stake in this election than just politics. This election is going to say something about who we are as a country. Hillary tells me when she was young, her mom taught her the Methodist creed: Do all the good you can, for all the people you can, in all the ways you can, as long as you can. That's her values. That's her north star—the idea we can summon what's best in each of us to make this country better for all of us.

That's what America is about. We are a country like no other; a place founded for the sake of an idea. It's not because we have the biggest buildings or we've got the most powerful military. It's because "we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal," that we are endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights.

We don't have to be rich, don't have to be privileged, don't have to look a certain way or have a certain name in order to make a contribution. Which is why patriots fought against tyranny to create this country, why our GIs defeated fascism. It's what gave women the courage to reach for the ballot and marchers to cross a bridge in Selma. It's what allowed workers to organize for better wages and better benefits. That's what's made America exceptional. That's what makes America great.

And it hasn't happened because somebody did it for us. When I ran in '08, I didn't say, "Yes, I can." What did I say?

Audience members. "Yes, we can!"

The President. I said, "Yes, we can." This is about what we can achieve together—us—through self-government. And Hillary understands that. She knows we've got a big country and a diverse country and not everybody is going to agree all the time. But we don't demonize each other. She knows issues aren't always black and white, so we've got to compromise sometimes, even when you think you're right. She knows none of us are perfect, including our Presidents, but we should at least try to conduct ourselves with some basic decency, some basic consideration for others.

So I know a lot of you sometimes may feel cynical and fed up about politics. And there's a lot about this election that might give you a reason to be cynical. But I am telling you right now—and especially the young people I'm talking to right now—you know, it isn't that often where, in your life, you've got a chance to move history. It's not that often where you have the chance to bend the arc of history in the direction of justice. It's not that often where you know you can make a difference. This is one of those moments.

Right now you can reject the mean-spirited politics that would take us backwards. Right now you can elect a leader who has spent her entire life trying to move this country forward: our first female President, an example for our daughters and our sons.

You have a chance to shape history. Don't let that slip away. Don't fall for the easy cynicism that tells you politics doesn't matter, my vote doesn't matter, everybody—all—they're all crooked, it's all the same. That's what those who have been opposed to me and now oppose Hillary, they want you to think that way so you don't vote. And by the way, here in North Carolina, there have been Republican politicians who have actually been trying to keep you from voting.

A few years ago, Roy Cooper's opponent, Governor McCrory, signed a law that made it harder for African Americans to vote. And look, I'm not—this is me—this is not me just opining. A Federal judge looked at all the evidence, said this law targeted Black voters with "surgi-

cal precision." That's a quote. One of the worst voter suppression laws in the country. Right now Donald Trump is calling on his supporters to monitor "certain areas" on election day. I don't know what "certain areas" he's talking about, but you do. No wonder Governor McCrory calls Donald Trump a role model.

This is not an accident. Think about—I want you to think about a woman I know named Grace Bell Hardison. She lives in Belhaven, North Carolina. She's lived there her entire life; she's a hundred years old. A few weeks ago, Republicans challenged her voter registration status, trying to remove her from the voter rolls. She has never left the county in a hundred years—a hundred years. The list of voters Republicans tried to purge was two-thirds Black and Democratic. And it was happening in counties across the State.

So, young people, I want you to understand this. There was a time when systematically denying Black folks the right to vote, that, too, was considered normal. It wasn't that long ago when folks had to guess the number of jellybeans in a jar, the number of bubbles on a bar of soap. It wasn't long ago when folks were beaten trying to register voters in Mississippi. So the idea that you would give your vote away, that you would sit there and not even take the 15 minutes to walk across the street and vote.

Yesterday Grace Bell Hardison sent me a letter, and I want you to know what she wrote. "Dear Mr. President, at a hundred years old, you can believe I have seen it all. [*Laughter*] It is by God's grace that I am still able to be here with my family. . . . I lived through the civil rights era. I know the blood that was shed in the name of the right to vote. I remember how hard Dr. King and many civil rights lawyers fought for the right to vote. I remember the victories they won for me and the generations after me. I can assure you, Mr. President, that I will keep fighting on. If I haven't stopped fighting at 100 years old, then neither can you."

Now, Miss Hardison got her voter registration reinstated. You better believe she's going to vote. They targeted the wrong woman—hundred years old, could be our great-grandmother; great-great-grandmother. It's bad enough she was disrespected. Are we now also going to disrespect her because we're not voting when she fought so hard to make sure she can vote? If she hasn't stopped fighting at a hundred years old, neither can we. If she's not tired, I'm not tired. If she's not tired, then I can keep on working to make sure everybody votes.

If you've been marching for criminal justice reform, that's great, but you still need to vote. If you care about the environment, that's great, but you need to vote. If you care about making sure our veterans get treated fairly and get the benefits they've earned, that's great, but you need to vote.

You need to vote. Because I know this: that if you vote, we'll win North Carolina. And if we win North Carolina, Hillary Clinton will be President. And Deborah Ross will be Senator. And Roy Cooper will be Governor.

Understand the stakes. Understand the stakes here. My name is not on the ballot. But everything we've worked for is on the ballot. Justice is on the ballot. Equality is on the ballot. Jobs are on the ballot. Health care is on the ballot. Criminal justice reform is on the ballot. Democracy is on the ballot.

I need you to vote! Don't choose fear, choose hope. Don't choose fear, choose hope. Don't choose fear, choose hope. Go out there and vote. And if you do, we'll remind the entire world why America is the greatest nation on Earth.

God bless you, Fayetteville. God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:20 p.m. in the Felton J. Capel Arena at Fayetteville State University. In his remarks, he referred to Donovan Livingston, graduate student and assistant director for tutoring services, University of North Carolina Greensboro; Ghazala Khan, mother of Capt. Humayun Khan, USA, who was killed in Iraq on June 8, 2004; Sen. Marco A. Rubio; and Judge Diana Gribbon Motz, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in Charlotte, North Carolina
November 4, 2016

The President. Hello, Charlotte! Are you fired up? Fired up!

Audience members. Ready to go!

The President. Fired up!

Audience members. Ready to go!

The President. Oh, let me tell you something, Dennis got me fired up! Can everybody please give him a big round of applause? I feel a little bit like the guest pastor coming into church. [*Laughter*] He got me fired up backstage.

There's some people I want to thank. First of all, outstanding Congresswoman Alma Adams is here. Your next State treasurer, Dan Blue III is here. Your next Governor, Roy Cooper, is in the house. Your outstanding mayor of Charlotte, Jennifer Roberts, is here. And all of you are here.

This is a pretty good crowd right here. So I just want to say to you: 4 days.

Audience members. Four days!

The President. Four days, North Carolina.

Audience members. Four days!

The President. Four days to decide the future of this country that we love. Now, the good news is you don't have to wait 4 days, because here in North Carolina, you can vote early. If you are not registered to vote, you have until tomorrow to register and vote at any of the one-stop locations in your county. There are two within a few miles from here: UNC–Charlotte, at the Cone Center—these guys right here, they'll show you where to go if you need to—or University City Regional Library.

And if those don't work for you, then you can go to iwillvote.com, and they'll show you where to vote. But when I see something that says "Carolina Votes" up there, I just want to make sure that whoever put up that sign isn't telling a lie. I need you to vote. The country needs you to vote. Because, I don't know about you, but I like to finish what I start. I like finishing what I start. And we need to finish what we started 8 years ago.

Now, I realize I'm kind of gray now. You say I still look good, though, right? Okay. Michelle says that too. [*Laughter*] But it makes me realize that back in 2008, some of you were 10. [*Laughter*] Some of you who are acting like you're grown now and you're in college, but back then you were watching the Disney Channel. So let me refresh your memory about where we were when I visited Charlotte in the final days of the 2008 campaign.

We were living through two long and painful wars. We were about to enter into the worst economic crisis in our lifetimes. But because of you, because of the American people, we battled back from what might have been a Great Depression. Last year, we saw incomes rise at the fastest pace in four decades. We saw poverty fall at the fastest pace since 1968.

We've created 15½ million new jobs. The unemployment rate is down to 4.9 percent, near its 9-year low. Twenty million people have health insurance that didn't have it before. We kicked our addiction to foreign oil. We doubled our production of renewable energy, including right here in Carolina. You've been a leader. America became a world leader in fighting climate change.

And by the way, we did all that, and gas is 2 bucks a gallon. Back in 2008, they said if you elect Obama, it's going to be 6 bucks a gallon. It's 2 bucks a gallon. Thanks, Obama.

We brought home more of our men and women in uniform who had sacrificed so much for our security. We took out Usama bin Laden. We've got ISIL on the run.

Here at home, we've seen the highest high school graduation rates on record. Highest college attendance and graduation rates. Provided Pell grants to millions more young people who didn't have them before. And by the way, we made sure that in all 50 States you can marry the person you love.

Now, the reason this happened wasn't just luck. It had to do with some policies that were thought through. But it most of all had to do

with our greatest asset, and that is you, the American people. People of every party, people of every faith, people of every color, creed, background, who understand we are stronger together. That it shouldn't matter the circumstances in which we're born, we should be able to live out our dreams. That it shouldn't matter whether you're young or old, Black or White, Latino, Asian, Native American, whether you've got a disability, whether you're gay or straight, we all pledge allegiance to the Red, White, and Blue. We all love this country. We all want to move it forward. That's the America I know.

And there is only one candidate in this race who understands that be—and she has devoted her life to creating a better America, and that's the next President of the United States, Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Now, this should not be a close race.

Audience members. No!

The President. But it's going to be a close race. It's going to be especially close here in North Carolina. And I want everybody to understand, all the progress we've made, everything we've fought for, everything we aspire to, all of that goes out the window if we don't win this election. So we've got to work our hearts out this week, over the next 4 days. We've got to work like our future depends on it. Because, you know what? Our future depends on it.

And that also means we've got to block out the noise. I know here in North Carolina, you are tired of all those ads on TV. It just gets you depressed, and there's so much noise and so much distraction, so much stuff that has nothing to do with your lives, so much stuff that's made up and fabricated. And so there's a temptation to want to just tune it out. But I want you to focus on the choice that we face in this election, because if you block out the noise and the distraction, the okey-doke, the nonsense, the hype, the misinformation, if you block all of that out, the choice could not be simpler, it could not be clearer.

I mean, there is a reason why, in an unprecedented fashion, you have Republicans and conservatives, who aren't running for office so they feel it's safe to do so, to denounce Donald Trump. And the reason is, is because Hillary's opponent, Donald Trump, is uniquely unqualified to be President, is temperamentally unfit to be Commander in Chief. And the fact that he has gotten this far tells me the degree to which our politics has become like a bad reality TV show.

Listen, if you want to keep our military the greatest fighting force in the world, if you want America to stay strong and respected around the world, you can't have a Commander in Chief who says it's okay to torture people. You can't have somebody who suggests that we can ban entire religions from our country.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo.

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Vote! He can't hear your boos, but he can hear your votes. A boo don't get you nowhere. Voting gets you someplace.

We can't afford a Commander in Chief who insults POWs, attacks a Gold Star mom, says he's going to be his own foreign policy adviser because he says he's got a "good brain." [*Laughter*] Who says that? [*Laughter*]

No, listen, I'm serious. If, like, you just knew somebody, some guy in your office or somebody at school, and they're all, like, "No, I've got a good brain," what would you think? You would not put that guy in charge of nothing. Come on, man. You can't do that. Listen, you know, you can't have somebody as your Commander in Chief who doesn't know the difference between Iraq and Iran; who doesn't know the difference between Lithuania and Latvia. Even a Republican Senator said we can't afford to give the nuclear codes to somebody that erratic. Now, think about that. We are talking about somebody being responsible for the nuclear codes. Right after you get sworn in, somebody comes and says, okay, Mr. President, here is what you've got to know. It's serious. You sit there and you go, oh, okay, this is serious.

So you can't have that person, as he is getting briefed, thinking "Saturday Night Live" insulted me, now I'm going to send a tweet. You can't have that. You've got to have

somebody who's focused, because this is serious business.

If you think that America is stronger when everybody does their part, and everybody does their fair share, you can't elect a candidate, the first in decades, who refuses to release any tax returns. We don't know who he does business with. We don't know who he owes favors to. We have no idea.

And what we do know is, because he's bragged about the fact that he's a really smart businessman, from his perspective that mean he doesn't pay Federal income taxes, and stiffs small businesses that did work for him, and stiffs workers what he owes them, and puts his name on a phony university that tricks people into paying up money and getting nothing for it.

The idea that this guy claims to be the voice for working people, someone who exploits working people, who probably doesn't know any working people except the guy who's cleaning up in his hotel and the guy who's mowing the lawn in his fairway. Come on. I know a lot of successful businesspeople. They don't go around cheating people to be successful.

If you cherish our Constitution, how can we elect a President who threatens, seriously, to shut down press that reports things he doesn't like? Or suggests that he might throw his opponent in jail in a Presidential debate? Or feels comfortable suggesting we discriminate against people of different faiths? Our Constitution does not allow that. You don't have to go to law school to know that. You've just got to read one of those pocket Constitutions that Mr. Khan was handing out. It's right there under the Bill of Rights.

There are places in the world where that might be acceptable, but this isn't one of them. This is the United States of America. We've got laws. We've got rights.

How could we possibly elect a President who feels comfortable—no, let me change that—who, for political purposes, deliberately vilifies minorities? Thinks it's funny to mock Americans with disabilities? Has no compunction in suggesting that women be treated as objects? Who brags about how being famous allows him to get away with something that is the definition of sexual assault, that we're trying to fight on college campuses right now, that we're trying to get rid of in those instances where it happens in our Armed Forces?

You're the Commander in Chief. You're supposed to be setting an example. And you've got somebody who wants to be elected President who calls women "pigs" or "slobs" or "dogs," or grades them on a scale of 1 to 10.

Listen, I have two magnificent daughters because I have a magnificent wife. And they are strong, and they are smart, and they are full of character, and they are kind. And there is nothing they cannot do. And we have taught them not just to respect others, but to respect themselves. The idea that we would put in place in the most prominent, most powerful office in the land somebody who undermines that?

And the worst part about it, Charlotte, is we have begun to treat this as if it's normal. Every day, this is a candidate who has said things that just 4 years ago, just 8 years ago, 12, we would have considered completely disqualifying. I mean, imagine if in 2008 I had said any of the things that this man said. Just imagine it. Imagine if I had behaved in the way this man behaved. Imagine what Republicans would have said. Imagine what the press would have said.

But now we act like, I guess, this is normal.

Audience members. No!

The President. As if it's some parody. You can't tell the difference between "Saturday Night Live" and what's actually happening on the news. [*Laughter*]

And then we hear people who are voting for him justifying it. They say, well, he doesn't really mean it. Or they say, well, that's just locker room talk. Although I've been in a lot of locker rooms; I never heard that. Or they say, well, you know what, we really don't like that, we really don't like this, but as long as he helps us potentially get tax cuts for the wealthy passed, or as long as he's willing to roll back Obamacare so 20 million people don't have health insurance anymore, as long as he's willing to do the things we want to do, then it's okay, we can ignore these elements of his character.

But I want all of you to understand something. I've been in this office now 8 years. And—[*applause*]—no, no, no, hold on, hold up. Hold on. I want you to pay attention here, because it's been interesting to watch the evolution of—and the realization that I arrived at during the course of this campaign and then the Presidency. Who you are, what you are does not change after you become President. It magnifies it. It shines a spotlight on it. You may be tested, and you may see who you are, but it doesn't fundamentally change who you are.

So, if you disrespected women before you were President, you'll disrespect women after you're President. If, as Dennis said, you accept the support of Klan sympathizers before you were President, are kind of slow in disowning it, saying, "Well, I don't know," that's how you'll be when you're President. If you disrespect the Constitution when you're running for President, you'll disrespect the Constitution even after you've sworn an oath to uphold and protect it.

And the reason that's important to understand is, because I'm a proud Democrat. But—[*applause*]—no, hold on. I can honestly say to myself that if we as Democrats had nominated somebody who said the things Mr. Trump said, then I'd have to say, I'm sorry. Yes, I'm a Democrat, but I'm an American first. I'm a human being first. I'm a father first. I'm a husband first.

And there are Republicans who have done that. I have a—Republican friends who don't think or act the way Donald Trump does, and they don't intend to vote for him because they understand this is somebody different who is uniquely unqualified to hold this job.

And the good news, though, North Carolina, is that you are uniquely qualified to make sure he doesn't get the job. But you've got to vote. You can't just sit on the sidelines. You've got to vote. You can't just complain. You've got to vote. You can't just get depressed and crawl up in the fetal position, and look at the online polling and go, oh, what's going to—no, you've just got to vote!

And the good news is, you don't have to just vote against somebody. You can vote for somebody, because there's a candidate who's actually worthy of your vote. A candidate who is smart and is steady and is tested, probably the most qualified person ever to run for this office: our next President, Hillary Clinton!

You know, I will tell you, as I've been watching this thing unfold, it has been a source of some frustration to me to see the degree to which Hillary's reality diverges from what you see in the media and on the news and on the blogs and all that, because this is somebody who has devoted her life to making this country better. This is somebody who has always fought on behalf of working people, has always fought on behalf of the vulnerable. Somebody who has worked tirelessly for civil rights.

Think about how she got her start. When Donald Trump and his dad were being sued by the Justice Department for denying housing to African American families, Hillary was going undercover from school to school to make sure minority kids were getting an equal shot at a good education. That's at the start of her career. And she didn't stop: working with the Children's Defense Fund, working as First Lady, working as a U.S. Senator, working as a Secretary of State.

Her heart has always been in the right place. She works hard every single day. I know, because I ran against her. [*Laughter*] I got worn out. [*Laughter*] And I said, she's so smart and hard-working, let—come on, work with me. And she made me a better President. She was in the Situation Room when we made the decision to go after bin Laden. She circled the globe tirelessly, earning the respect of world leaders. She did her homework. She was well prepared. She wasn't flashy. She was loyal. She had my back. She had the American people's back. She understands the world. She understands the challenges that we face. And when things don't go her way, she doesn't whine, she doesn't complain, she doesn't say the game is rigged.

You know what, I—you know, Malia and Sasha, they used to have, like, soccer when they were kids—little kids—7, 8. They'd be running around, just all circling around the ball. You know how they don't know how to spread out;

they're just like running around. [*Laughter*] And sometimes, they'd lose; sometimes, they'd win. But the one thing that I always taught Malia and Sasha—and I'm sure the parents here who have kids in sports teach you—is you don't complain when things aren't going your way. You don't whine. There's no crying in baseball. [*Laughter*] You just come back and you work harder and you do better. And that's what Hillary Clinton does. If she gets knocked down, she gets back up. She dusts herself off. She gets back to work. She'll be a great President as long as, Carolina, you vote for Hillary Clinton for President!

And by the way, Deborah Ross will be the same kind of Senator if you give her a shot. I've gotten a chance to know Deborah. This is an outstanding woman. She has heard your stories. She's going to fight to give working families a fair shot, our kids a great education, our seniors a secure retirement. And unlike her opponent, she does not support Donald Trump. So you can't just stop voting. You can't just stop by voting for Hillary. You've got to go down the ballot. You've got to vote for Roy Cooper. You've got to vote for Deborah Ross.

You know, Senator Richard Burr, who Deborah is running against——

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo. What are we going to do?

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Vote!

He said just a while back, "There's not a separation between me and Donald Trump." Now, you think about that.

Audience members. What?

The President. What?

Audience members. What?

The President. What? [*Laughter*]

"Not a separation." Two things are possible there. Either he really does think like Donald Trump, in which case you don't want him in the United States Senate representing Carolina. Or he's just saying he agrees with Donald Trump because he thinks it will help him get elected, in which case you don't want him representing North Carolina in the United States Senate.

The other day, he joked about violence against Hillary Clinton. He went on to apologize. And you know, I know Richard Burr, and I suspect he didn't actually mean it. But the problem is, is that they've become so accustomed to saying these things in their rallies and in their town halls and on the Internet, it becomes an applause line. And it's become normalized, the idea of making a joke about violence against somebody who is running for President or is President. There's a reason why we've got Secret Service. There's nothing normal about that. And that's not what North Carolina is about. That's not what America is about.

So, if you want Hillary Clinton to continue the progress we've made, then you've got to give her allies like Deborah Ross. You can't just elect Hillary and stick her with a Republican Congress that's been behaving the way they've been behaving. They have not been willing to work with me, even when we were trying to prevent a Great Depression. They wouldn't do stuff even when it originally was their idea. I'd, like, go through their list of things they wanted to do, and I'd say, okay, I want to do this too. Let's do it. They'd say, oh, well, now that you're for it, we can't be for it.

Now they're promising even more dysfunction in Washington. That is hard to do. [*Laughter*] They're promising years of hearings and investigations. They're promising more shutdowns, more obstruction, more repeal votes. Deborah's opponent just said, if Hillary wins, he'll do everything he can to block all Supreme Court nominations. Never in history have we seen that attitude. Eleven years ago, the same guy said a Supreme Court could not function without nine Justices. So what changed all the sudden? The reason they say they're not confirming my nominee, Merrick Garland, who everybody acknowledges is an outstanding jurist, is they said, "We're going to let the American people decide; it's too close to the election." Now we're getting close to the election, and they're saying, "Well, if Hillary wins, we might not nominate him anyway." I—what happened? Only Republican Presidents get to nominate judges now?

You've got some Republicans who are actually suggesting they will impeach Hillary. She's not elected yet. They can't even tell you what it is they'll impeach her for. They just decided, that's how we're going to roll, that's what we're going to do; we are good at saying no because we can't say yes to anything; we can't pass our own stuff; we don't know what we stand for, but we do know if we block everything from happening, no matter how much it damages the American people, it might advantage us in an election.

Listen, gridlock—gridlock is not some mysterious fog that descends on Washington. Gridlock is not the result of Democrats and Republicans being equally unreasonable. Gridlock has happened because Republicans like Richard Burr have decided they're going to oppose anything, no matter how good it is for the country, because a Democrat proposes it or because they're worried about their Republican voters not liking it. So, if you think a vote for gridlock is good, you should vote Republican.

But if you think America can do better than that, if you care about creating jobs for families in your neighborhoods, if you care about childcare for single moms who are trying to get to work, if you care about equal pay for equal work and raising the minimum wage, if you care about making sure that we're rebuilding our roads and our bridges and our airports, rebuilding America, then you need to vote for Democrats up and down the ticket. You need to vote for Hillary Clinton and vote for Deborah Ross, vote for Roy Cooper, people who will put you ahead of politics, people who are ready to roll up their sleeves and move this country forward.

So let me just say this: If you are not yet persuaded, I want you to understand, there is something more fundamental at stake in this election than just policies and programs. What's at stake right now is the character of our country. Hillary Clinton says her mom taught her the Methodist creed: Do all you can, for all the people you can, in all the ways you can, as long as you can. That is her idea of America. Those are the values she wants to summon for all of us to make this country better. That's what this country is all about.

We are a nation like no other, not because we're the largest or the richest or we've got the biggest military. We are exceptional because this country was founded for a sake of an idea: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal," that we're endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights. You don't have to be born into wealth or privilege to make a difference in this country. You don't have to practice a certain faith or have a certain last name in order to be successful in this country.

That idea is what drove patriots to choose revolution over tyranny. It's what led our GIs to defeat fascism an ocean away. It's what gave women the courage to reach for the ballot, gave marchers the courage to cross that bridge in Selma, gave workers the courage to organize for collective bargaining and better wages. That's what's made America exceptional. That's what's made America great.

And the thing about it is, North Carolina, it doesn't depend on somebody up on high, doesn't depend on somebody doing it for us. It's what we do for ourselves. It's what we do for each other. It's achieved by us, together, through the hard and sometimes frustrating, but ultimately necessary work of self-government.

When I ran in '08, I didn't say, "Yes, I can." I said, "Yes, we can." You and me. All of us. Justice Louis Brandeis once said, the most important office in a democracy is not President or Senator or mayor, it's the office of citizen. That's what this has always been about: What can we do together? And so the question right now is, what are we going to do together? Because if you vote, if you vote, we will win North Carolina.

But we're going to have to do it together. You can't just depend on somebody else to do it. That's what Hillary understands. She understands this is a big, diverse country, a big, diverse democracy. We only succeed when citizens are involved and paying attention. And that's why it's so important that we understand, even when we disagree with somebody, that

we can engage with them. We don't demonize other people. We're willing to compromise even when we think we're right. We don't try to burn the house down when we don't get our way. She understands that.

But she needs help. She needs your help. You can't sit on the sidelines on this one, especially here in North Carolina. Because some of you may be aware there was a time when African Americans couldn't vote here in North Carolina. You had to figure out how many jelly beans were in a jar. You had to figure out how many bubbles there were on a bar of soap. You may also know that just recently, this Governor who is currently in place signed a law that a Federal judge said with "surgical precision" was trying to discriminate and prevent people from voting.

Now, that law has been suspended, which is why it matters that we have an independent judiciary. It matters that we have a Constitution. But can you imagine, after all the battles that have been waged, after all the blood, sweat, and tears to give us the right to a voice in our democracy, after all the hardship, all the struggle, that some of us would choose to give away our birthright, give away our power, give away our voice because we couldn't go across the street and spend 15 minutes to determine who it was that we're going to make fundamental decisions about our lives?

If that idea doesn't upset you, I want to tell you about a woman named Grace Bell Hardison. She sent me a letter. You might be interested in it. She's a hundred years old. Says: "Dear Mr. President, at a hundred years old, you can believe I've seen it all. It's by God's grace I'm still able to be here with my family. I lived through the civil rights era. I know the blood that was shed in the name of the right to vote. I remember how hard Dr. King and many civil rights lawyers fought for the right to vote. I remember the victories they won for me and generations after me. I can assure you, Mr. President, I will keep fighting on. If I haven't stopped fighting at a hundred years old, then neither can you." Neither can you.

The authorities were trying to strike her off the voter registration rolls a few weeks ago. Somebody caught them and said, uh-uh. She got her voter registration reinstated. You can bet she's going to vote.

If Miss Grace Bell Hardison, a hundred years old, if she's not tired, then I'm not tired. If I'm not tired, you can't be tired. My name won't be on the ballot this time. But everything we've worked for is on the ballot. Twenty million people having health care is on the ballot. Treating the LGBT community with respect and equality is on the ballot. Good jobs and good wages is on the ballot. Early childhood education is on the ballot. Women's rights is on the ballot. Workers' rights is on the ballot. Justice is on the ballot. Fairness is on the ballot. Decency is on the ballot. Our very democracy is on the ballot.

And Hillary Clinton will advance these things if you give her a chance. Deborah Ross will fight for these things if you give her a chance. But you've got to go out and vote. You've got to get your friends to vote and your cousins to vote, your uncles and neighbors and coworkers to vote. Tell them, this is a moment where we take a stand. Tell them, this is a moment where our character is tested. Tell them, don't succumb to fear. Tell them to lift up hope. Tell them to choose hope. Choose hope. Carolina, choose hope. Carolina, choose what's best in us. Choose hope. Get out there and vote.

Let's work for 4 more days. Let's win North Carolina. Let's win the Presidency for Hillary Clinton. Let's put Deborah Ross in the Senate. Let's make Roy Cooper our Governor. Let's finish what we started and remind the world why this is the greatest nation on Earth.

God bless you, North Carolina. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:56 p.m. at the PNC Music Pavilion. In his remarks, he referred to Dennis Reed, founder and chief executive officer, Inspire the Fire, who introduced the President; Attorney General Roy A. Cooper III and Gov. Patrick L. McCrory of North Carolina; Ghazala and Khizr Khan, parents of Capt. Humayun Khan, USA, who was killed in Iraq on June 8, 2004; Sen. Marco A.

Rubio; and Judge Diana Gribbon Motz, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

The President's Weekly Address
November 5, 2016

Hi, everybody. Americans have been fighting for the idea that health care is a right and not a privilege since the second-to-last time the Cubs won the World Series. I'm not talking about the 2016 Cubs, I'm talking about the 1908 Cubs.

That's a really long time. And thanks to the efforts of so many of you, we did it. Today, 20 million more American adults know the financial security of health insurance. On top of that, another 3 million more kids have coverage than when I took office. In fact, never in American history has the uninsured rate been lower than it is right now, and health care prices have been rising slower than they have in 50 years.

If you haven't gotten covered yet, now is the time to do it. It's open enrollment season. That means you can go to healthcare.gov and shop for insurance plans in a marketplace where insurers compete for your business. Healthcare.gov is faster and easier to use than ever before. With a few clicks, you can start comparing plans to see which one is right for you and your family. You can even look up your doctor and medications as you shop. Most Americans who get coverage through healthcare.gov can find an option that costs less than $75 a month. That's probably less than your cell phone bill.

Now, most of us don't get our health care through the marketplace. We get it through our job or through Medicare or Medicaid. And what you should know is that, thanks to the Affordable Care Act, your coverage is better today than it was before. You now have free preventive care. There are no more annual or lifetime limits on essential health care. Women can get free checkups, and you can't get charged more just for being a woman. Young people can stay on a parent's plan until they turn 26. Seniors get discounts on their prescriptions. And no one can be denied coverage just because of a preexisting condition.

That's because our goal wasn't just to make sure more people have coverage, it was to make sure more people have better coverage. And as we continue working to make the system better, there's something you can do to help yourself and help the country. Go to healthcare.gov. Get covered. And if there's someone you care about who hasn't signed up yet, help them get covered today too.

Enrollment is open right now, but only until January 31. If you sign up by December 15, you'll be covered by the beginning of the year. So go check out healthcare.gov or call 1–800–318–2596, and someone will personally help you find a plan that's right for you.

Insurance is based on the idea that we're all in it together. That's what makes it work. And it's the same idea that's always made America great.

Thanks, everybody, and have a good weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 12:05 p.m. on November 4 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on November 5. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 4, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on November 5. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address

Remarks at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in Kissimmee, Florida

November 6, 2016

The President. Hello, Florida! Are you fired up? Are you ready to go?

Audience member. I love you!

The President. I love you back! It is good to be back.

Couple of people I want to thank. First of all, my favorite and, more importantly, Michelle's favorite, give it up for the great Stevie Wonder. I was going to come up and sing with Stevie, but Stevie explained that this was designed to get votes not lose votes, so we decided not to do that. [*Laughter*]

I also want to thank one of the finest public servants Florida has ever known and one of the greatest Senators in the country, Bill Nelson. And I want to thank your next United States Senator, Patrick Murphy.

Two days, Florida. Two days to decide the future of this country. And I need you to go vote. I need your help to help finish what we started 8 years ago.

Think about when I was—where we were when I last visited Florida, in the final days of the 2008 campaign: living through two long wars, about to enter into the worst economic crisis in 80 years. Because of you, we have been able to turn the page. We fought back. We avoided a depression. We restored the housing market. We helped to make the financial system work again. We raised income. Poverty fell. Created 15½ million new jobs. Unemployment rate 4.9 percent, near a 9-year low. Twenty million Americans have health insurance. We kicked our addiction to foreign oil, doubled our production of renewable energy. Became a world leader in climate change. Oh, and by the way, gas is 2 bucks a gallon.

We brought home more of our men and women in uniform. We took out Usama bin Laden. High school graduation rates, alltime high; college enrollment at an alltime high. We helped to make sure that in all 50 States, people have the freedom to marry who they love. No wonder I've got gray hair. We've been working hard.

And most of all, over these last 8 years, as I've traveled all across 50 States, as I've traveled to Puerto Rico, as I've traveled all around the country, I've seen what has made America great. I have seen you, the American people.

Audience member. Yes, you! [*Laughter*]

The President. I've got a hype man here.

Audience member. Obama! Obama! Obama!

The President. I have seen Americans of every party and every faith who know that we are stronger together. Doesn't matter whether you're young or old, men or women, Black, White, Latino, Asian, Native American, folks with disabilities, gay, straight—all of us are pledging allegiance to the Red, White, and Blue, all of us trying to make life better for our kids and our grandkids and generations to follow.

And I will tell you there's only one candidate in this race who has devoted her life to lifting up that better America, and that's the next President of the United States, Hillary Clinton. Hillary!

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. Now, here's the thing though, Florida: All the progress we've made goes out the window if we don't win this election. And we win this election if we win Florida. If we win Florida, it's a wrap. We win Florida, it's over.

So we've got to work our hearts out this week, these next few days, as if our future depends on it, because our future depends on it. And I know that sometimes at the end of a campaign, there's been so much negativity and so much noise and so much distraction and so much innuendo and rumors and false statements, and at a certain point, you feel like you just want to tune it all out. Some of you all saw "Saturday Night Live" yesterday? They just decided that's it, we can't do it anymore. They ran outside. [*Laughter*] And sometimes, you feel like that.

But I want you to focus on this election and its candidates, because the truth is, the choice

couldn't be simpler or clearer. On the one hand, you have somebody who may be the most qualified person ever to run for the Presidency. On the other hand, you've got the Donald.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo, vote. Don't boo, vote. Don't boo!

Audience members. Vote!

The President. He can't hear your boos, but he can hear your vote.

There is a reason that so many Republicans, so many conservatives have denounced Donald Trump, even if sometimes they said, well, but we're going to vote for him anyway. That is because Donald Trump is uniquely unqualified to be President, temperamentally unfit to be Commander in Chief.

Look, if you want to keep our military the greatest fighting force in the world, if you want America to be strong and respected around the world, we cannot have a Commander in Chief who suggests that it's okay to torture people or to ban entire religions from our country or insults POWs or attacks a Gold Star mom or talks down our troops.

Even a Republican Senator said we cannot afford to give the nuclear codes to somebody so erratic. Think about that. We're talking about somebody who has the nuclear codes if they're elected President. Now, you may have heard that—this was just announced, I just read it, so I can't confirm it's true, but apparently, his campaign has taken away his Twitter. [*Laughter*] In the last 2 days, they had so little confidence in his self-control, they said, we're just going to take away your Twitter.

Now, if somebody can't handle a Twitter account, they can't handle the nuclear codes. [*Laughter*] If somebody starts tweeting at 3 in the morning because "SNL" made fun of you—[*laughter*]—then you can't handle the nuclear codes.

If you believe that America is stronger when everybody does their part, and everybody pays their fair share, then you can't have the first candidate in decades who refuses to release any tax returns, who hasn't paid his Federal income tax in years, who stiffs small businesses who have done work for him, stiffs workers who have done work for him. That's not being a champion of working people. That's exploiting working people.

If you cherish our Constitution, you can't elect a President who threatens to shut down the free press, throws his—threatens to throw his opponents in jail, discriminates against people of different faiths. That's not what our Constitution allows. There may be other countries who do that. Maybe he admires Vladimir Putin and some other folks who think that's okay, but this is the United States of America. We can't have that.

The President. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

Audience members. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

The President. We believe in the Constitution here in the United States of America. We believe in the Bill of Rights.

Audience member. Sí, se puede, Obama!

The President. Sí, se puede.

If you believe that we're stronger together, we cannot elect a President who vilifies minorities, who mocks Americans with disabilities, who calls immigrants criminals and rapists. We can't elect a President who brags that because he's famous, he can get away with stuff that looks like the definition of sexual assault or calls women "pigs" and "dogs" and "slobs," grades them on a scale of 1 to 10.

I've got two daughters, and they are magnificent because my wife is magnificent. And we've taught them that they can do anything a man can do and then some. And our friends who have sons have taught their sons to respect women and respect girls and judge the on the content of their character, not what they look like, and not to demean them and put them down. That's what I want whoever is in the Oval Office to do, is to help show all our girls, all our boys what it means to respect women.

So this election should not be a close choice. And the fact that, look, let's admit it, there are people who are supporting this other guy is an indication of the degree to which stuff that's not normal people have been treating like it's normal. I mean, we hear people justify some of this comment—some of his comments——

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Hold on a second.

Audience member. Mr. President, we love you!

The President. I love you too, but hold on one second.

We hear people say that it's okay because he doesn't mean it. Or they say, well, it's just locker room talk. Or they say, well, yes, what he says is terrible, but once he gets into office, it will be different.

Audience members. No!

The President. Let me tell you something. I've been in this office now almost 8 years. And here's what I can tell you. Here's what I can tell you. Who you are, what you are does not change when you take office. It just magnifies who you are. It just shines a spotlight on who you are. If you disrespect women before you became President, you'll do so once you're President. If you accept the support of Klan sympathizers before you're President, then you'll accept their support after you're President. If you disrespect the Constitution when you're running for President, then you are even more likely to disrespect it even when you swear to uphold that Constitution when you take the oath of office.

And look, I am a proud Democrat. But we're not Democrats or Republicans first. We're Americans first. I've got Republican friends. They don't think or act the way he does, which is why they're not planning to vote for him. Our values are at stake.

You know, just a small—just a little example. I was in Fayetteville—some of you may have seen this—and it was a packed hall, and a Trump supporter stood up with a sign. He was an elderly gentleman, had a military uniform on. I couldn't really hear what he was saying. And everybody in the crowd started shouting him down and booing. And I said to everybody, you know what, just settle down. First of all, he's not doing any harm. Second of all, he's elderly. And third of all, we have free speech in this country. And I—and fourth of all, I said, don't boo, vote. [*Laughter*]

Just a few hours later, Trump gets up on stage in front of his crowd—this is just a few hours later—and he said, did you see how President Obama yelled at a Trump supporter in his audience? Now, just made it up. Didn't just make it up, but said the exact opposite of what had happened. With impunity. There was tape, there was a video, and some of the press called him out on it. But the point is that he thought it was okay just to lie in front of all his supporters, on television. Wasn't even trying to be sneaky about it.

And—but that says something about how unacceptable behavior has become normal. And that's why he is uniquely unqualified to hold this job. And the good news is, all of you are uniquely qualified to make sure he doesn't get the job. Florida, you've just got to vote!

And the good news also is, you don't have to just vote against somebody, you got somebody to vote for. You got somebody who is worthy of your vote. Because she is smart and she is steady and she is tested—probably the most qualified person ever to run for this office—our next President, Hillary Clinton!

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. Hillary!

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. This is somebody who's dedicated her life to making this country better. Think about how she got her start. While Donald Trump and his developer dad were being sued by the Justice Department for denying housing to African American families, Hillary was going undercover from school to school to make sure minority kids were getting equal educations. She has not stopped fighting for justice and equality ever since.

Her heart is in the right place, works hard every day. I know. I ran against her. [*Laughter*] And it was tiring because she worked so hard. I benefited from it because she came to work for me, and she was there in the room when we were making tough decisions, when we were deciding whether to go after bin Laden. She circled the globe tirelessly as Secretary of State, earned the respect of world leaders. Her efforts weren't always flashy; folks didn't always appreciate them here at home. But she made me a better President. She made this country stronger. She understands the challenges we face.

And by the way, when things don't go her way, she doesn't whine, she doesn't complain, doesn't talk about things being rigged. Just works harder. Comes back stronger. Comes back better. She's like the Energizer Bunny; she just, like, keeps on going.

She will be an outstanding President, especially if she gets some help, which is why you got to also vote for Patrick Murphy for United States Senate. One thing about being President, you've got to have allies in Congress. Unlike his opponent Marco Rubio——

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo. Oh, don't, oh, whoa—you're supposed to vote!

Patrick actually shows up to work, puts you ahead of politics. He's fought to make sure Planned Parenthood is still around to provide health care to people. He's fought for comprehensive immigration reform. He accepts the science behind climate change, brought Democrats and Republicans together to fund the Everglades restoration.

There's one other big difference between Patrick and Marco Rubio: Marco Rubio supports Donald Trump. Now, keep in mind, Marco, a while back, when he was running against Donald, called him a "dangerous con artist" who "spent his career sticking it to working people."

Audience member. Hypocrite!

The President. He tweeted, "friends don't let friends vote for con artists." [*Laughter*] Guess who just voted for Trump a few days ago: Marco Rubio. So, A, that means he doesn't have any good friends. [*Laughter*] B, it means that even though he knows Trump is unqualified, even though he knows he's a con artist, he still voted for him because it was politically expedient.

So, if you want a Senator who will say anything, do anything, be anybody just to get elected, then that's your guy. If you want a Senator who will show up and work for you and tell you the truth, then vote for Patrick Murphy, and give Hillary some help.

It's not enough just to vote for Hillary. You can't stick her with a Republican Congress that behaves the way they've been behaving with me. I mean, we were about to go into a Great Depression. By the way, because there had been a Republican administration that had created a whole bunch of problems, we were coming in to clean it up. And they refused to lift a finger, said no to everything we said we would do. And now they want to take credit for, like, the auto industry being saved. No, they weren't there. [*Laughter*] They said, no. Run back the tape.

Instead, what they've done is to practice unprecedented dysfunction in Washington. And they say now that they're going to do the same if Hillary wins—promising years of hearings, years of investigations, years of shutdowns, more obstruction, more repeal votes.

Marco Rubio said he would not have supported the nomination of Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, an outstanding jurist, first Latina on the Bench. Proud of her Puerto Rican heritage, by all accounts doing an outstanding job. He would not have voted for her. Now he and his Republican colleagues are threatening to block all Supreme Court Justices.

Audience member. We need a medic!

The President. Okay, we need a medic. They'll be all right. Don't worry, people fall down when you're standing up this long. Everybody bend their knees real quick. [*Laughter*] There you go. Do a little exercise. They'll be okay, just give them some room.

So now they're threatening to block all nominees. And they're suggesting they might impeach Hillary. They don't know what for yet—[*laughter*]—but they're thinking about it. You know what? That's not how this democracy is supposed to work. If a Democrat was threatening to do that, I would say that's wrong. It's not any better when a Republican decides to do it. Gridlock is not some mysterious fog that descends on Washington. It's not both sides being equally wrong. Gridlock has been happening because you've got folks like Marco Rubio who decide to oppose anything

that's good for the country if a Democrat opposes [proposes]* it.

Audience member. Your first 4 years!

The President. You want some more endless gridlock, vote for Republicans. You want an America that can do better, that can put people back to work, that can make sure that young people can go to college, that can provide childcare for the single mom, that will raise the minimum wage, that will make sure that we've got paid family leave—then you need to vote for Democrats up and down the ticket. You've got to vote for Hillary; you've got to vote for Patrick—people who will put you ahead of politics, who are ready to do work and move this country forward.

So here's the bottom line. [*Applause*] Here's the bottom line: There is something more fundamental at stake in this election than any policy, any plan. It's about the character of this country. Who are we? What do we stand for? What do we project around the world?

When Hillary was young, her mom taught her the Methodist creed: Do all the good you can, for all the people you can, in all the ways you can, for as long as you can. That's what she believes. That's the idea she believes she can summon from all of us in this country. That's what America is about.

What makes America great—the reason people from all around the world have looked up to us and want to come here—it's not because of the size of our military. It's not because of our wealth. It's because this country was founded for the sake of an idea: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal," that we are endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights. You don't have to be born into wealth and privilege in this country to succeed. You don't have to look a certain way or have a certain last name to be able to provide for your family.

That's what drove patriots to fight a revolution. That's why our GIs fought fascism and communism. It's what gave women the courage to reach for the ballot, marchers to cross that bridge in Selma, workers to organize for collective bargaining and better wages. That's what makes America exceptional and great.

It's not about what somebody on high will do for us, it's what we do together, from the bottom up: citizens, self-governing, helping to move this country forward.

And Hillary understands that. She knows our democracy is big. It's diverse. We don't demonize each other all the time. Progress requires compromise. She knows that. She knows that none of us are perfect, not even Presidents, but we should try to conduct ourselves with the basic values of decency and courtesy and dignity and respecting other people and being bighearted and knowing that if this country has given you so many breaks you should give something back; that we should look out for all kids, not just our own kids.

So I know a lot of you may be cynical or fed up about politics. And this election has been a tough one. But you have the power to reject the mean-spirited politics that would take us backwards. The most important office in a democracy isn't President, it's citizen. You have the chance to make sure that this country goes in a better direction. You have the chance to elect somebody who has spent her entire life believing in this democracy.

Audience member. We're going to miss you!

The President. You have the chance to elect the first female President, an example for our daughters and our sons.

You have the chance to shape history. Don't let that chance slip away. Don't fall for those who tell you your vote doesn't matter.

Audience member. No!

The President. Don't fall for this idea that all politicians are the same. They're not. None of them are perfect, but they're not all the same. Although, some of them are a lot worse. [*Laughter*] Some of them are better. Some of them will look out for you. Some of you—well, I can't say what they'll do to you. [*Laughter*]

So, if you've been marching for criminal justice, you've got to have a President and a Congress who actually wants to disrupt the pipeline from underfunded schools to overcrowded

* White House correction.

jails. If you've been marching for the environment, you've got to have a President and a Congress that believes in science and will protect this planet.

If you want more good jobs and a higher minimum wage, you can't just sit there and complain, you've got to vote. If you care about immigration reform or helping Puerto Rico get back on its feet, you've got to vote.

You know, over these last 8 years, a lot of things have happened, but I can tell you unequivocally, without a doubt, with data to back it up, that this country is a lot better off now than it was when I came into office. I can prove it. The numbers don't lie. And so I want you to understand that that would not have happened had it not been for the votes you made back in '08, wouldn't have happened had it not been for the votes that you made in 2012. You have proof that your vote matters. And I may not be on the ballot this time, but everything we've done has been on the ballot.

Justice is on the ballot. Fairness is on the ballot. Looking after working people is on the ballot. Higher wages is on the ballot. Protecting the environment is on the ballot. Treating people fairly is on the ballot. Civil rights is on the ballot. Our democracy is on the ballot.

Hillary Clinton, she'll build on the progress we've made, but you have to vote. Then you've got to get your friends voting, your cousins voting, your neighbors voting, your coworkers voting. Cousin Pookie has got to get in the—get him off the couch, he's got to vote.

And when you vote, America is transformed. When you vote, we cannot lose. When you vote, we reject fear. When you vote, we embrace hope.

Choose hope! Choose hope! Choose hope! Vote! Vote! Elect Hillary Clinton. Elect Patrick Murphy. Let's continue this amazing journey that we started and show the world why America is the greatest nation on Earth.

I love you, Florida. Let's finish the job!

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:35 p.m. in the Osceola County Stadium at Osceola Heritage Park. In his remarks, he referred to Ghazala Khan, mother of Capt. Humayun Khan, USA, who was killed in Iraq on June 8, 2004; Sen. Marco A. Rubio; and President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in Ann Arbor, Michigan

November 7, 2016

The President. Hello, Michigan! Go Blue! Can everybody please give it up for Chelsea Clinton? Oh, that—who arranged the weather today? Was it you? Nice job. [*Laughter*]

It is good to be back in Ann Arbor. And I know you guys are feeling pretty good right now—9 and 0—[*applause*]—9 and 0. It's impressive. Although I talked to Coach Harbaugh. He's all, like, no, no, nice game. [*Laughter*] We've got a long way to go. [*Laughter*] So he's focused. And I need you to stay focused, because I'm asking you to pull off another victory this week.

We've got 1 more day, Michigan. One more day.

Audience member. Love you, Obama!

The President. I love you back. I do.

But tomorrow, tomorrow you will choose whether we continue this journey of progress or whether it all goes out the window. Tomorrow you get to choose between a politics of blame and divisiveness and resentment, or you can choose a politics that says we're all stronger together.

I've got some friends with me here who believe in that better politics: your outstanding U.S. Senator, Gary Peters, is in the house; Representative Debbie Dingell; Representative Brenda Lawrence; Representative Sandy Levin.

Some people who aren't quite as famous, but I want to take a minute to thank, because I'm feeling a little sentimental. This is going to be my last—probably my last day of campaigning

for a while, but not just here in Michigan, all across America. I want to say thanks to the organizers of so many grassroots efforts. There are some organizers here who got their start on my first campaign, and they have never stopped working: picking up phones, hitting the streets, living and breathing the hard work of change every single day. You are the best organizers on the planet. I am so proud of you. And it is because of you that I'm here today. And it's because of you and the work you do that we've got a chance to continue to make history tomorrow.

Now, think about where we were 8 years ago. The thing is I just realized some of you were, like, 10. [*Laughter*] Some of you were, let's admit it, while I was out there campaigning, you were watching the Disney Channel. [*Laughter*] You were. She's nodding, it's true. I loved "iCarly." I've got you. I understand. [*Laughter*] "Josh and Drake." See, I know because I was sitting there—although I had a soft spot for "SpongeBob." "SpongeBob" was probably my favorite. Because Malia and Sasha, they wouldn't let me watch what I wanted to watch. [*Laughter*]

But for those of you who don't quite remember 8 years ago, we were living through two long wars, going through the worst economic crisis in 80 years. And because of the resilience and strength of the American people, but also because you gave me a chance to put in place policies on behalf of working families, we were able to turn the page.

We took what could have been a Great Depression and turned it into recovery. Our businesses turned job losses into 15 ½ million new jobs. We saw an auto industry that was flat on its back roar its way back to break new records; brought the unemployment rate in Michigan below the national average, and across the Nation, cut the unemployment rate in half. Last year, incomes went up faster than any time in 30 years; poverty went down any—faster than any time in 30 years. Twenty million Americans have health insurance that didn't have it before.

We doubled our production of clean energy, became the world leader in fighting climate change. Brought home so many of our men and women in uniform. Took out Usama bin Laden. High school graduation rates, alltime high. College graduation, alltime high. Marriage equality a reality from coast to coast.

That happens because people in '08 decided to choose hope over fear. And over the course of these 8 years, all across 50 States, I've always seen what made America great. I have seen you: Americans of every faith, every background, Republicans and Democrats, who understand that we're stronger together—young, old, men, women, Black, White, Latino, Asian, Native American, people with disabilities, gay, straight—all of us pledging allegiance to the Red, White, and Blue. That's the America I know. And there's only one candidate in this race who's devoted her life to that better America, and that is the next President of the United States, Hillary Clinton.

But, Michigan, all that progress goes down the drain if we don't win tomorrow. This race will be close here in Michigan, just like it will be in a lot of parts of the country. And I know it's been a long campaign. And the end of every campaign brings all kinds of craziness and negative ads and noise and distractions. And for those of you who are voting for the first time, I know sometimes you think, well, this is kind of strange. [*Laughter*] It's not always like that. I want you to tune all—out all the noise. And I want you just to focus. Because the choice you face when you step into the voting booth, it really could not be clearer.

Donald Trump is temperamentally unfit to be Commander in Chief. And I—look, think about this—over the weekend, his campaign took away his Twitter account. [*Laughter*] Now, if your closest advisers don't trust you to tweet—[*laughter*]—then how can we trust him with the nuclear codes?

He's unqualified to be America's chief executive. He brags that he's a business guy. But we've got a lot of business men and women who succeed without stiffing small businesses and workers out of—once they've already done work for you, and then suddenly, you don't pay them? And you basically say, you know what, because I've got more lawyers than you, I don't have to pay you.

This is the first candidate in decades to hide his tax returns. He hasn't paid his Federal income taxes in years. Which means that he's not contributing to our veterans, he's not contributing to our troops, he's not contributing to our outstanding public universities.

Audience members. No!

The President. And by the way, since we're in Michigan, take a look at what he said about the auto industry. Now, remember, when I came into office, industry was flat on its back. And we made some tough decisions to bring workers, management, everybody together in order to revitalize the industry. Just last summer, Donald Trump said "you could have let it go bankrupt, frankly."

Audience member. Wow.

The President. Now—wow! Now, I want you to understand, had the Big Three gone bankrupt, or two of the three gone bankrupt, that could have cost a million jobs across this country. That could have killed Michigan's economy. But Donald Trump didn't stop there. He actually suggested shipping Michigan's auto jobs to States that don't have unions so they can pay their workers less.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo!

Audience members. Vote!

The President. I—so he, I mean, he said this. Look it up. [*Laughter*] He said, squeeze Michigan, make Michigan hurt. Then your autoworkers would have no choice but to accept less pay. That is not somebody who's a champion for working people.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo!

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Vote! He can't hear your boos, but he'll hear your votes tomorrow.

This is not somebody who's a champion for working families. For all his tough talk about China, he uses Chinese steel in his hotels. He's given jobs to Chinese steelworkers, not American steelworkers. For all his tough talk on trade, the trade war he threatens to trigger might well damage the auto industry all over again.

Audience member. He's got to go!

Audience members. Yes! [*Laughter*]

The President. Every time my administration has brought a trade enforcement case against China that's been decided, the United States of America has won. That's how you stand up for American workers.

So, to every autoworker on the assembly line right here in Michigan, to every small business owner, every barkeep, every teacher in communities that depend on the auto industry, I think I've earned some credibility here. Plants that were closing when I took office are working double shift now. The auto industry has record sales. I think I've earned some credibility here. Manufacturing jobs have grown at the fastest rate since the nineties, when another Clinton was President. I think we've earned some credibility here. So, when I tell you that Donald Trump is not the guy who's going to look out for you, you need to listen. Do not be bamboozled. Don't fall for the okey-doke. [*Laughter*]

In his 70 years on Earth, the Donald has never shown any regard for working folks. I don't think he knows working people except for the folks who clean up in his hotels and the folks who mow the fairway on his golf course. He didn't care about working people then; he won't now.

Meanwhile, Hillary Clinton is going to put forward the biggest investment in new jobs since World War II. Plans, she's got plans to grow manufacturing; plans to boost people's wages; plans to help students with their college debt; specific plans, not vague plans, not imaginary plans. Not plans that don't add up. She knows how to do it. And that's why she needs to be the next President of the United States, as long as you vote.

Now, let me tell you something else I've learned about this job, Michigan.

Audience member. I love you!

The President. I love you too, but I've got business to do here. Hold on.

One thing I—one thing you learn about this job is who you are, what you are doesn't change once you move in the Oval Office. It only gets magnified; a spotlight is put on you. It's like an EKG for your character. [*Laughter*]

If you denigrate minorities before you take office, then you'll denigrate minorities after you take office. If you think of immigrants as criminals and rapists when you're running for office, then that's how you're going to think once you're in office. If you mock people with disabilities or treat women as objects, calling them "pigs" and "dogs" and rating them on a 1-to-10 scale instead of based on their character and intelligence, then that's how you're going to think when you're in office.

If you insult POWs and talk down our troops and say you know more than our generals do about fighting terrorism, even though you don't know the difference between Shia and Sunni, then that's how you're going to conduct yourself as a Commander in Chief. You know, it's bad being arrogant when you know what you're talking about, but it's really bad being arrogant when you don't know what you're talking about.

If you accept the support of Klan sympathizers, if they say they really like what you're doing, and you're kind of slow to denounce or separate yourself from them, that's what you're going to do when you're in office. If you disrespect the Constitution by threatening to shut down a free press when they write things you don't like or threaten to throw your opponent in jail while you're in the middle of a Presidential debate—[*laughter*]—or discriminate against people of different faiths, that's what you will do when you're in office, regardless of the oath to uphold the Constitution that you have to take in this office.

So Donald Trump is uniquely unqualified to hold this job. But the good news, Michigan, is you are uniquely qualified to make sure he does not get the job. But you've got to vote! You've got to vote tomorrow to make that happen.

And the good news is, you don't just have to vote against something. You actually have a candidate who's worthy of your vote, a candidate who is smart, a candidate who's steady, a candidate who's tested, probably the most qualified person ever to run for this office: the next President of the United States, Hillary Clinton.

I will tell you, sometimes I get frustrated watching the coverage of this election.

Audience members. Me too!

The President. There's a bunch of it that has not been on the level. But I want to tell you something right now. The way campaigns have unfolded, we just start accepting crazy stuff as normal. And people, if they just repeat attacks enough and outright lies over and over again, as long as it's on Facebook and people can see it, as long as it's on social media, people start believing it. And it creates this dust cloud of nonsense.

So I've had to bite my tongue after a lot of the nonsense I've heard about Hillary. I know Chelsea has. Can you imagine? Just crazy conspiracy theorizing. But I know Hillary. She's somebody who's dedicated her life to making this country better. Think about how she got her start as a young woman. She was about her age, while Donald Trump and his dad were being sued by the Justice Department for denying housing to African American families. Hillary, about your age, was going undercover from school to school to make sure minority kids were getting an equal education. She has not stopped fighting for justice and equality ever since.

She'll be smart. She'll be steady. She actually respects working Americans. She'll make sure the economy works for everybody who are still struggling out there, folks who feel like they're not getting a fair shake. She will work her heart out to create jobs that families can live on, childcare that you can afford. She'll fight for students who are struggling with college debt. She'll fight to make sure that women get paid the same for doing the same work as a guy.

She knows workers deserve a higher minimum wage. She knows how the world works. She will make sure to keep America strong and respected. She won't turn people against each other just to win an election. She will be a leader for all of us because she knows we're stronger together.

And that's what this all comes down to, Michigan. I said this before: the most important office in a democracy is not President, it's

not Senator, it's not Congressman or mayor, it is the office of citizen. The most powerful word in our democracy is the word "we." We, the people. We shall overcome. Yes, we can. America has never been——

Audience members. Yes, we can! Yes, we can! Yes, we can!

The President. America is not about one—what one person can do for you. I didn't say, "Yes, I can." I said, "Yes, we can." I told you, I wasn't a perfect man, wouldn't be a perfect President, but I said, I will work alongside you, I will work as hard as I can to make sure that all of us together can advance the causes we believe in. What we can achieve together through this sometimes frustrating, often slow, but ultimately enduring role that we play in self-government.

This is what this country runs on, is you, deciding that you care enough about it to get involved, even when the odds are steep, even when the road is long. That's our history. That's why patriots chose revolution over tyranny. That's how GIs your age defeated fascism. That's how women found the courage to reach for the ballot. That's how marchers crossed a bridge in Selma. That's how workers organized for collective bargaining and better wages. They did it together.

In this country, you don't have to be born to wealth or privilege to make a difference. You don't have to practice a certain faith or look a certain way to bend the arc of history in a better direction. "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal," that we are endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights. That's what makes America exceptional: all of us equal, all of us having a voice, all of us making a claim on the American Dream. All of us fulfilling our responsibilities, and not just enjoying the rights of this incredible Nation, this amazing experiment in self-government. That's what it's about.

And so, Michigan, whatever credibility I've earned after 8 years as President, I am asking you to trust me on this one. I already voted. I voted for Hillary Clinton, because I am absolutely confident that when she is President, this country will be in good hands.

And I'm asking you to do the same, especially the young people here. It isn't that often in your life where you know you can make a difference. Not that often you've got a chance to move history in a better direction. This is one of those moments. This is one of those moments. Don't let it slip away.

You have the chance to reject a coarse, divisive, mean-spirited politics that would take us backwards. You can elect a leader who's spent her entire life trying to appeal to the better natures—angels of our nature. You have a chance to elect our first female President, a President who will be an example for our daughters and our sons.

And so, after all the noise, after the negative ads, after all the campaigning, all the rallies, it now just comes down to you. It's out of Hillary's hands now. It's out of Michelle's hands. It's out of my hands. It's in your hands. The fate of our democracy depends on what you do when you step into that voting booth tomorrow, how many people you bring to make sure they vote.

Do not fall into the easy cynicism that says your vote doesn't matter, all politicians are the same. That's what special interests and lobbyists, my opponents, Hillary's opponents, that's what they want you to think so you don't go vote. Your vote matters. There are States where I won two votes a precinct. That's how I won that State. Your voice matters. Your voice makes a difference. I have heard it.

And for all the tough lessons that I've learned during this Presidency, for all the times I've fallen short, I have told Hillary, and I'll tell you, what's picked me up every single time, what has gotten me working as hard as I can even when I'm discouraged, even when I'm down, it's been you, the American people.

Time and again, you've picked me up. The autoworker in Detroit who won the lottery but didn't kick back and retire, bought his wife one of the new cars he built, kept clocking away because he loved his work—that's who I think about.

The young woman in Sterling Heights who wrote me 7 years ago to say she was worried about her family's future in Michigan, then

checked in again to say this year that her dad's supply company was hiring, she was working her way through Macomb Community College—she kept me going.

The woman in North Carolina who was stripped from the voter rolls a few weeks ago, but insisted on winning her registration back, wrote me and said, "I remember the victories previous generations won for me and generations after me. I can assure you, Mr. President, I will keep fighting. If I haven't stopped fighting at a hundred years old then neither can you." A hundred-year-old woman, if she's not tired, I'm not tired. She's kept me going.

So Michigan, I ask you to do for Hillary what you did for me. I ask you to carry her the same way you carried me. I ask you to make her better the same way you made me better.

And tomorrow, if you're willing to stand with me again, if you're willing to get your friends and neighbors and coworkers to the polls again, if you're willing to reject fear again, if you're willing to embrace hope again, then we will finish what we started. We will elect Hillary as President. We will remind the world why the United States of America is the greatest nation on Earth.

Yes, we can! Let's get to work. God bless you. God bless these United States of America! Let's go vote.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:38 p.m. in the Ray L. Fisher Stadium at the University of Michigan. In his remarks, he referred to Chelsea Clinton, daughter of Democratic Presidential nominee Clinton and former President William J. Clinton, who introduced the President; James J. Harbaugh, head coach, University of Michigan football team; Curtice, OH, resident William Shanteau, a worker at the Chrysler Jefferson North Assembly Plant in Detroit, MI, who purchased a winning Powerball lottery ticket in June 2010, and his wife Lisa; Sterling Heights, MI, resident Brianna Leathers, who wrote a letter to the President in 2009, and her father Steve Leathers; and Belhaven, NC, resident Grace Bell Hardison.

Remarks to an Overflow Crowd at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in Durham, New Hampshire
November 7, 2016

Hello, everybody! Well, I just wanted to let everybody know, it's good to be back in New Hampshire! It is a spectacular night. It's almost like summer in New Hampshire here.

And look, I'm mainly here to say thank you. The first time I came to New Hampshire, I didn't have any gray hair. [*Laughter*] Now I do. But I tell you, because of the incredible people here, the way that you guys have lifted up Michelle and me—and not to mention Malia and Sasha when they've been in camp up here—you guys have always taken good care of us.

I just have one more favor to ask you. Make sure that the person who succeeds me is somebody who shares the values that all of you express in your daily lives every single day: somebody who cares about the environment, somebody who cares about our kids, someone who respects all people. And we've got the chance not only to elect an outstanding President in Hillary Clinton, but we also have the chance to elect an outstanding U.S. Senator in your Governor, Maggie Hassan.

So I just want everybody—you've only got 1 more day left, which all comes down to how hard we work. If you took the time to come down here and say hi to me, I know you've got to time tomorrow to knock on some doors and make some phone calls. All right?

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 4:35 p.m. outside the Whittemore Center Arena at the University of New Hampshire. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in Durham

November 7, 2016

The President. Hello, New Hampshire! Oh, it is good to be back in Durham! And it's a good day to be a Wildcat! Say, every day is a good day to be a Wildcat.

Can everybody please give it up for our outstanding public servants: your Senator, Jeanne Shaheen; Representative Annie McLane Kuster. And two women you can send to join them in Washington: your Governor and next United States Senator, Maggie Hassan; and your next Congresswoman, Carol Shea-Porter. Your next Governor, Colin Van Ostern. And give it up for two great friends of mine: former Congresswoman Gabby Giffords and her husband and former astronaut Mark Kelly.

I've got to say, because this is, I think, going to be my last big event——

Audience members. No!

The President. Yes! I mean, we've got one in Philly. But Michelle is talking there, so I won't get any attention. [*Laughter*] So I want to take some time just to thank some very special people who have put everything they've got into this campaign, not just here in New Hampshire, but across America, and that is all the grassroots organizers who work so hard every single day. They don't get a lot of attention. Some of them started on my first campaign. They picked up the phones, they hit the streets. They just live and breathe the hard work of change. I could not be prouder of them. They're the best organizers on the planet, and I could not be more proud of you. So thank you, organizers, for the great work you do.

Audience member. I love you!

The President. I love you back. I do.

So 1 more day, New Hampshire. One more day. One more day and you——

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Okay! I can't hear you, but I appreciate you.

Audience members. Obama! Obama! Obama!

Audience member. We love you, Mr. President!

The President. I love you too. I do. But—[*applause*].

So we've got 1 more day. And we can choose a politics of blame and divisiveness and resentment. Or you can choose a politics that says, we're stronger together. Tomorrow you can choose whether we continue the journey of progress or whether it all goes out the window.

Think about where we were 8 years ago. Now, I realize some of you were 10. [*Laughter*] And you know you were watching Nickelodeon. And I was trying to think back—you had "Josh and Drake." You had "iCarly." Although in our household, "SpongeBob" ruled. So not all of you were paying attention, so let me just reprise for you what was going on 8 years ago.

We were living through two long wars, the worst economic crisis in 80 years. But because of the American people and because we made some good decisions about what might help working families, we turned the page. Our businesses have turned job losses into 15½ million new jobs. Incomes and wages are up, and poverty is down by more than any time in last 30 years. Twenty million Americans have health insurance that didn't have it before. We doubled our production of clean energy. We became the world leader in fighting climate change. We brought home more of our men and women in uniform. We took out Usama bin Laden. Marriage equality is a reality from coast to coast. High school graduation is at an alltime high. College enrollment at an alltime high.

And over these 8 years, across all 50 States, I've seen what always has made America great. I've seen you, the American people. Not just Democrats, but people of every party, people of every faith who know that we're stronger together—young people and old; Black, White, Latino, Asian, Native American; people with disabilities; gay, straight—all pledging allegiance to the Red, White, and Blue. That's the America I know. That's the America I love.

And there's one candidate in this race who has devoted her life to that better America, the next President of the United States, Hillary Clinton!

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

Audience members. Hillary! Hillary! Hillary!

The President. But make no mistake, all that progress goes down the drain if we don't win tomorrow. And New Hampshire, it's a small State, but it's an important State. There are some scenarios where Hillary doesn't win if she doesn't win New Hampshire. So it depends on you. I know this has been a long campaign, and I know it's been full of negative ads and distractions and noise. I want you to tune all that out. I want you to focus. Because the choice you face when you step into that voting booth could not be clearer.

Donald Trump is temperamentally unfit to be Commander in Chief. This is not just my opinion, this is the opinion of a lot of Republicans. Think about it. Over the weekend, his campaign took his Twitter account away from him. [*Laughter*] If your closest advisers don't trust you to tweet, how can you trust him with the nuclear codes? You can't do it. [*Applause*] Am I wrong about that?

He is uniquely unqualified to be America's chief executive. He says he's a business guy. But we've got a lot of great business men and women, including right here in New Hampshire, who don't try to succeed by stiffing small businesses who did work for him or stiffing workers what they owe them. This is the first candidate in decades to hide his tax returns, partly because he hasn't paid any Federal income taxes. He thinks that's smart, but that means he's not making a dime's worth of contribution to caring for our veterans, to supporting our troops, to rebuilding our roads, to building up our public colleges and universities.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo!

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Vote! He can't—New Hampshire, Donald Trump can't hear your boos, but he can hear your votes.

He's got nothing serious to offer on jobs. There hasn't been enough talk about this economy in this election. And you know why? Because we've created jobs for 73 months in a row now. Wages are rising. Just last week, the unemployment rate was at 4.9 percent; that's near the lowest levels in nearly 9 years.

So Donald Trump generally avoids facts, or he just denies them. So he said this is a "disaster." A disaster? [*Laughter*] Listen, I just came from Michigan. You want to know what a real disaster looks like, think back to that State and what we were dealing with 8 years ago. The American auto industry was flat on its back. Unemployment was soaring. Today's plants across that State and across the region that were shut down, they're now doing double shifts. And you know what Donald Trump's idea—Donald Trump's idea for the auto industry? He actually suggested that Michigan should send its auto jobs to States that pay their workers less. And by making Michigan workers suffer, they'd have no choice but to accept less pay if they wanted to get their jobs back. Does that sound——

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo. What are you supposed to do?

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Vote!

Does that sound like somebody who actually cares about working people?

Audience members. No!

The President. New England has lost mill jobs over the years. Would that be a good way to bring them back? Just send them down to places where they pay them less?

Audience members. No!

The President. Look, we got manufacturing growing again over these last 8 years, first time since the 1990s. And Hillary's going to keep that going. She's put forward the biggest investment in new jobs since World War II. She's got plans to grow manufacturing, boost people's wages, help students with college debt. That's why she should be the next President of the United States.

And, New Hampshire, let me tell you something I've learned about this job. Who you are,

what you are, that doesn't change once you get into the Oval Office. It magnifies who you are. It shines a spotlight on who you are. But if you denigrate minorities when you're running for office; if you call immigrants criminals and rapists when you're running for office; if you mock people with disabilities and treat women as objects, calling them "pigs" and "dogs" and scoring them on a 1-through-10 test—if you do that when you're running for office, that's how you'll conduct yourself in office.

If you insult POWs and talk our troops down, if you say you know more than our generals when you can't tell the difference between a Shia and a Sunni—[*laughter*]—that's how you'll conduct yourself as Commander in Chief. You know, it's bad enough being arrogant, it's bad being arrogant and not knowing anything.

If you accept the support of Klan sympathizers, saying, well, I don't know what they're about, then that's how you'll be thinking when you take office. If you disrespect the Constitution, threaten to shut down reporters that don't—write things you don't like, threatening to throw your opponent in jail in the middle of a Presidential debate—[*laughter*]—if you discriminate against people of different faiths—that happens in other countries, but not this one. This is the United States of America. We've got a Constitution. You know, his buddy Putin may think that's okay. I don't think it's okay. The American people don't think it's okay. Come on!

Donald Trump is uniquely unqualified to hold this job. And the good news is, New Hampshire, you are uniquely qualified to make sure he does not get this job. But you've got to vote. You've got to vote tomorrow. And the good news is, you don't have to—you don't just have to vote against someone, you've got a candidate who is actually worthy of your vote, who is smart and tested and probably the most qualified person ever to run for this office, and that is Hillary Clinton.

You know, there's—I've got to say, since my name is not on the ballot, there are times where I've been just kind of trying to bite my tongue. But there is a lot about this election that has not been on the level. But I'm going to level with you right now.

The way campaigns have gotten, we've come to accept crazy stuff as normal. And you see the strategy of just repeating attacks and outright lies over and over again. But it gets churned in social media and Facebook, and no matter how false they are, they just create this cloud of dust.

And so I've had to bite my lip and just listen to some of the nonsense that's been said about Hillary. I know Hillary. I ran against Hillary. [*Laughter*] She worked for me. [*Laughter*] This is somebody who has dedicated her life to making this country better. This is somebody who cares about working families because she comes from a working family. Think about how she got her start.

As a young woman, not much older than most of the folks here, while Donald Trump and his developer dad were being sued by the Justice Department for denying housing to African American families, Hillary was going undercover from school to school to make sure minority kids were getting an equal shot at a good education. And she has not stopped fighting. She has not stopped fighting for justice. She has not stopped fighting for equality. She has not stopped fighting for kids ever since.

She will be a smart and steady President. And unlike her opponent, she actually respects working Americans. She will work her heart out to create jobs that families can live on and childcare you can afford. She'll fight for equal pay for equal work. She'll make sure that we've got a higher minimum wage and family leave that's paid so people can afford to use it and make sure that this economy works for everybody.

And unlike her opponent, she actually knows what's going on in the world. She's traveled around the world. She's respected around the world. She'll work her heart out to keep America respected and strong and safe. And she will not turn people against each other just to win an election. She'll be a leader for all of us, even those who don't vote for her, because she knows we are stronger together.

But, New Hampshire, if you want Hillary to continue the progress we've made, she's going to need allies in the Senate, allies like Maggie Hassan. You cannot just stick her with Republicans in Congress who are already promising even more unprecedented dysfunction in Washington: more shutdowns, more obstruction, more repeal votes, years of hearings, years of investigations. Some are saying they'll block all Supreme Court nominations——

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo!

Audience members. Vote!

The President. I mean, apparently, they think only Republican Presidents should nominate judges. If you think "Voting for endless gridlock" is a good slogan, you should vote for the Republicans. And by the way, Maggie's opponent, I gather she is kind of running like maybe she's a Democrat all of a sudden. [*Laughter*] But in Washington, she supports Mitch McConnell. In Washington, she supports a majority that has consistently been about saying no to everything. She supports eliminating health care for 20 million Americans who already have it. So don't buy that okey-doke. There's a clear choice involved here.

Maggie Hassan will make sure we've got a Democratic majority to work for the things you care about. Her opponent will not. It's a clear choice. America can do better than gridlock. If you care about creating jobs, you care about childcare they can afford, you care about equal pay for women and a higher wages for workers, then you've got to vote for Democrats up and down the ticket: people like Hillary; people like Maggie; people who will put you ahead of politics, who will involve all of us in the work of moving this country forward.

And that's ultimately what this comes down to, New Hampshire. You know, I—the most important office in a democracy is not President, it's not Senator, it's not Governor or mayor. It's citizen. That's the most important office. That's why we don't talk about "I," we talk about "we." We, the people. We shall overcome. Yes, we can. I didn't say, "Yes, I can." I said, "Yes, we can." America has never been about what one person says he'll do for us; it's about what we do together, through the slow, and yes, sometimes frustrating, but ultimately, enduring work of self-government.

This is where you come in. You hold the most important office in a democracy. It depends on you. Even when the odds are steep. Even when the road is long. It's been ordinary people who have made the difference: that's how patriots chose revolution over tyranny; the GIs who defeated fascism around the world, they were your age; women finding the courage to reach for the ballot; marchers crossing a bridge in Selma for their dignity; workers organizing collective bargaining and better wages. You make these things happen.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal," that we are endowed by our Creator with certain unalienable rights. In this country, you don't have to be born of wealth or privilege to make a difference. You don't have to practice a certain faith or look a certain way to bend the arc of history. And that's what makes America exceptional. That's what's always made America great.

So, with whatever credibility I've got after 8 years as your President, I am asking you to trust me on this one. I already voted for Hillary. We've got early vote in Illinois. I already voted for her. I am absolutely confident that when she's President, this country will be in good hands.

And I'm asking you to do the same and especially the young people who are here today. It isn't that often—it isn't that often in life, you'll discover—where you just know you can make a difference. It's not that often where you have a chance to shape history. The world is watching us right now. This is one of those moments. Don't let it slip away. Don't give away your power. You have a chance to send a clear signal: We are not divisive; we are not mean spirited. That's not what America is about. We're not going to go backwards.

You can elect a leader who's spent her life trying to move this country forward. Our first female President. A President who will be an example for our daughters and for our sons and

send a signal, there is no glass ceiling, anybody who works hard and cares enough can achieve.

And now, after months of campaigning, after all the rallies, after all the ads, it all comes down to you. This is out of Hillary's hands now. It's out of my hands. It's out of Michelle's hands. It's out of Maggie's hands or Jeanne's hands. It's in your hands. The fate of our democracy depends on what you do when you step into that voting booth tomorrow. It depends on whether you're telling your friends and your neighbors and your relatives that they have to go and exercise this power, this legacy.

Don't dare fall for this easy cynicism that says my vote doesn't matter or politicians are all the same, because they're not. Hillary's opponent wants you to think that. Folks—Mitch McConnell wants you to think that. They don't want you to vote. In some States they've made it harder for you to vote. But your vote does matter. I won some States by two votes a precinct. Your voice makes a difference.

And if you don't believe that, I want to leave you with one last story.

Audience member. Don't leave—[*inaudible*].

The President. Some—I want to leave you with one last story, and this is for the young people here. This is for the young people here, so I want you to pay attention.

Now, because a lot of you won't remember this, but when I ran for the Presidency in '08, the truth is, is that not a lot of people gave me a chance. I was a skinny guy with a funny name. [*Laughter*] And when I look back at the pictures of me speaking back then, like, I look really young. [*Laughter*]

I—so, initially, when we started the campaign, the odds weren't for us. And we had a lot of States to cover, and I had never run a national campaign. And so we had to try to get any support we could, any endorsements we could. So we—I fly down to North Carolina—South Carolina—South Carolina. I go down to South Carolina for some State legislator's banquet or something. And I'm sitting next to this State legislator, and she hasn't made an endorsement yet. And I ask her for the endorsement. That's what you do when you're kind of trying to get support.

And she says, you know what, Obama, I like you. You're a little young, a little green behind the ears, but I like you. I will endorse you if you come to my hometown of Greenwood, South Carolina.

So I must have had a little too much wine, because I just said okay on the spot. [*Laughter*] I was feeling a little desperate, didn't have a lot of endorsements, a lot of support back then. So fast-forward about a month and a half later. I'd been working in Iowa, I'd been coming up to New Hampshire, I'd been phone—calling people and trying to raise money. And I'm exhausted, haven't seen my family. I'm a little grouchy. And I fly down to South Carolina, down to Greenville, and I get in about midnight. And I'm exhausted. I'm dragging my bags through the airport—little airport terminal and get it to the hotel. And all I want to do is sleep.

And suddenly, right as I get to the door, I get this tap on my shoulder. And I turn around and it's one of my staffers. Said, "Senator"—because back then I was just a Senator. He said, "Senator, you do know that you've got to wake up at 6:30 tomorrow morning, right?" I said, "What do you mean?" He said: "Well, remember that State legislator you met, you promised you'd go out to Greenwood? Well, that's tomorrow." [*Laughter*]

So I'm muttering under my breath. I'm not happy. I go in, just fall out. Alarm goes off, and I feel terrible. I am exhausted. Think I'm coming down with a cold. I open up the curtains: It's pouring down rain outside! Pouring down rain. Horrible day. I make myself some coffee, and I get the newspaper outside my door and open it up. There's a bad story about me in the New York Times. [*Laughter*]

I get dressed, shaved, walk out, just kind of still groggy, still staggering. My umbrella blows open. That ever happen to you? [*Laughter*] As I'm walking out. And I get soaked! Soaked! I'm just soaked. [*Laughter*] I get in the car. I say, all right, how long is it going to take to Greenwood? An hour and a half. [*Laughter*] An hour and a half.

So we're driving, and we're driving, and we're driving. It doesn't seem like we're going

anywhere. Sheets of rain are pouring down. And finally, we get to Greenwood, although you can't tell because there's really no buildings in Greenwood that are more than, like, two stories high. [*Laughter*] And there are just a couple little stores, and there's like one stoplight.

And we pull up to this little park field house. And I get out, and I'm sloshing around in the rain, and my socks are wet. And I walk in—and I've driven an hour and a half—and there are, like, 15, 20 people there—15, 20 people. And I will tell you, they didn't look any happier to see me than—as I did to see them. [*Laughter*] They were wet and damp, and they weren't really excited. They don't—didn't know why they were there. And so I go around the room, and I say, how do you do, what do you do, and talk to everybody. But they're not really feeling it right now.

And so I'm about to make my pitch. I'm trying to muster myself up—let me make the best of this. I'm going to do it quick, and then I'm going to get out of there. And suddenly, I hear this voice from the back just shout, "Fired up!"

Audience members. Ready to go!

The President. And everybody in the room says, "Fired up!"

Audience members. Ready to go!

The President. And I say, "Ready to"—and then I hear the voice say, "Ready to go!" And everybody in the room says, "Ready to go!" And I don't know what's going on. [*Laughter*] I think these people are crazy. [*Laughter*] Maybe I shouldn't have come here.

And then I look in the back of the room. And there's this middle-aged woman, and she's dressed like she just came from church. She's got a big church hat. And she's got, I think, a gold tooth. [*Laughter*] Turns out, she is—holds a position in the local NAACP office and also—I'm not kidding you—is a private detective. This is a true story. [*Laughter*] She's like a private eye, although it's hard to think that you wouldn't see her coming. [*Laughter*] She's very colorful.

And she's grinning at me. And apparently, she is known wherever she goes by saying this chant, "Fired up!" And everybody knows her, so they know that when she says, "Fired up!" they've got to say "Fired up!" And when she says, "Ready to go!" everybody has got to say, "Ready to go!"

And this is what she does. Every meeting she goes to, she does this thing, which is kind of strange. [*Laughter*] So the thing is, though, she keeps on doing it. And everybody keeps on—she says, "Fired up!" and they say, "Fired up!" And, "Ready to go!" "Ready to go!"

But the interesting things is after a while, I'm starting to get kind of fired up. [*Laughter*] I'm starting to feel like I'm ready to go. And all those negative thoughts and all those bad memories start kind of drifting away. And we have a great meeting with these 20 people. And they all say, we're going to support you, and we're going to go out there and work.

And even after we left Greenwood, the rest of the day, all the campaigning, when I saw my staff, I said, "Are you fired up?" They said, "I'm fired up, boss." [*Laughter*] "Are you ready to go?" "I'm ready to go." [*Laughter*]

And it just goes to show you how one voice can change a room. And if it can change a room, it can change a city. And if it can change a city, it can change a State. And if it can change a State, it can change a nation. And if it can change a nation, it can change the world!

So I just have one question for you, New Hampshire: Are you fired up?

Audience members. Fired up!

The President. Ready to go?

Audience members. Ready to go!

The President. Fired up!

Audience members. Fired up!

The President. Ready to go!

Audience members. Ready to go!

The President. Fired up!

Audience members. Fired up!

The President. Ready to go!

Audience members. Ready to go!

The President. Let's go finish what we started. Let's elect Hillary Clinton! Let's elect Maggie Hassan!

I love you, New Hampshire. God bless you. God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:57 p.m. in the Whittemore Center Arena at the University of New Hampshire. In his remarks, he referred to New Hampshire Executive Councilor Colin Van Ostern; President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; Sen. Kelly A. Ayotte; South Carolina State Rep. J. Anne Parks; and Edith S. Childs, city council member, Greenwood, SC.

Statement on the Death of Former Attorney General Janet Wood Reno
November 7, 2016

When Janet Reno arrived in Washington in 1993, the city had never seen anyone like her before and hasn't since. She rose from a childhood on the edge of the Everglades to become our Nation's first female Attorney General, a position she held for longer than anyone in 150 years.

The daughter of reporters—including a mother who literally wrestled alligators—Janet was tough as nails and never cowered in her fight for what was right. In her 15 years as Miami-Dade's top prosecutor, she helped reform juvenile justice, created Miami's drug court, and made protecting children the center of her work. As Attorney General, she insisted on transparency and accountability. Throughout her tenure, marked by high-profile, complicated cases, Janet was unflappable, never losing her candor, sense of humor, or love of kayaking on the Potomac. Above all, she was committed to the defining mission of the Justice Department: ensuring that all Americans are treated equal under the law.

Janet Reno was an American original, a public servant whose intellect, integrity, and fierce commitment to justice helped shape our Nation's legal landscape. Her legacy lives on in a generation of lawyers she inspired, the ordinary lives she touched, and a nation that is more just. Michelle and I send our deepest condolences to her family and all who loved and admired her.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally for Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
November 7, 2016

The First Lady. Wow! Oh, my goodness! Wow! Well, thank you so much. Oh, my goodness. First of all, I want to thank Bill for that generous introduction. And thank you, Philadelphia! Look at you! Wow! What an amazing crowd! What an amazing night!

This is truly an emotional moment for me for so many reasons. First, we are 1 day away from once again making history. Tomorrow we have the chance to elect someone who is singularly qualified to be our President: our friend, Hillary Clinton.

She is a phenomenal woman who has devoted her life to helping others: kids in crumbling schools, families struggling to get by, women who need a voice. And let me tell you, when the going gets tough, Hillary is the person we want on our side, because she never gives up. She never quits. She refuses to ever be knocked down, pushed around, or counted out.

And on top of all that, she is an outstanding mother, a loving and loyal wife, a bold and brilliant woman who is an inspiration to me and to millions across this country. And in just a few hours, we have the power to make her our next President. Now, how amazing is that?

So I am honored to be here on this stage on the eve of this historic moment. I'm also emotional because, in many ways, speaking here tonight is perhaps the last and most important thing that I can do for my country as First Lady. And let me just take a moment to thank you, to thank the people of this country for giving our family the extraordinary honor of serving as your First Family.

Thank you for your love. Thank you for your prayers. Thank you for welcoming us into your

communities with open hearts, for giving us a chance, whether you agreed with our politics or not. Every day, you have inspired us with your courage and your decency. And every day, we have tried to make you proud and live up to the standard of citizenship that you set. Because we know that our words and actions are a reflection to the world of who we are as a nation, and more importantly, our actions are a reflection of what behavior we hope our children will emulate.

And we believe that our responsibility to you and to this country does not end when we leave the White House. That's why Barack and I have been working so hard in this election, because we believe that we have a duty to ensure that this country is handed over to a leader that we all can trust, a leader who takes this job seriously, someone who is truly ready to be Commander in Chief on day one. We deserve a leader who will ensure that our daughters are safe and respected and that our sons understand that truly strong men are compassionate and kind.

We deserve a leader who sees the dignity and humanity in all of us and who will encourage us to see the better angels in one another. We deserve a leader who sees our diversity not as a threat, but as a blessing. A leader who sees us not as rich or poor, but as hard-working folks doing the best we can with what we've got. A leader who sees us not as Democrats and Republicans, but as neighbors and friends who all love this country; who sees us not just as Black or White, immigrant or native born, but as brothers and sisters who are all infinitely worthy, all an important part of this great American story.

And I am here tonight because I believe with all my heart and soul that Hillary Clinton is that leader. And we need to do everything we can to get her elected President of the United States. And here's the beauty of it all: This election is on us. It is in our hands. If we get out and vote tomorrow, Hillary Clinton will win.

But if we stay home, or if we play around with a protest vote, then Hillary's opponent will win. Period, end of story.

Audience members. Boo!

The First Lady. Look, it is important to understand that Presidential elections are breathtakingly close. They are decided by just 5, 10, 15 votes per precinct. So, by just taking a few minutes out of your day tomorrow to cast your vote and bringing your friends and family with you, each of you has the power to swing an entire precinct for Hillary. And if we swing enough precincts, we will win this State, we will win this election, and we will continue the progress that we have all made together these past 8 years. We will do this. That is the power that you have.

Tomorrow, with your vote, you can stand up to those who seek to divide us and make us afraid. You can declare with one voice that we are always stronger together. Tomorrow, with your vote, you can say that this country has always been great, that it is the greatest nation on Earth. A country where a girl like me from the South Side of Chicago, whose great-great-grandfather was a slave, can go to some of the finest universities on Earth. A country where the biracial son of a single mother from Hawaii and the son of a single mother from Hope, Arkansas, can both make it to the White House. A country where a passionate, outspoken young woman, determined to do all the good she can, can go on to break the highest, hardest glass ceiling and become our President. That is the power you have and the history you can make tomorrow. But only if we get out and vote for Hillary Clinton.

So can we count on you?

Audience members. Yes!

The First Lady. Can Hillary count on you?

Audience members. Yes!

The First Lady. We've got to get this done. You've got to get out and vote. We can make this happen.

So I now have the honor of introducing my husband to the stage. It's my chance—perhaps the last chance I have—to introduce him as President of the United States. So I just want to take a moment to publicly say how proud I am of all that he has done for this country.

I am proud not just of what he has done, but how he has done it: getting the job done in the

face of unimaginable challenges, always going high when they go low. Showing us all what intelligence, dignity, and grace really look like, and never, ever compromising his values or beliefs.

Ladies and gentleman, I introduce to you the love of my life, the President of the United States, Barack Obama.

The President. Hello, Philadelphia! Are you fired up?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Are you ready to go?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Thank you, Michelle Obama, for being my partner, my love, my rock, and an amazing First Lady.

Eight years ago, I asked all of you to join me on an unlikely journey. We set out not just to change programs or policies, but to rebuild an economy where everyone had a chance to succeed; to reform Washington so that your voices would be more powerful than entrenched lobbyists. We set out to keep America safe and strong, not just with the might of our arms and the extraordinary valor of our troops, but with the power of our ideals; to shape a changing America so that everybody belongs and everybody has a part, everybody has a responsibility.

Now, we didn't know when we began that America would fall into the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes. But in the face of great challenges, in the face of entrenched interests, in the face of, in some cases, unprecedented obstruction and a cynical Washington, we stayed with it. The American people stayed with it. And because of your resilience, because of your strength, because of your faith, we turned "Yes, we can" into "Yes, we did."

Look at the road we've traveled. We've seen America turn recession into recovery, our businesses create 15½ million new jobs. Putting more people back to work than all the other advanced economies combined. A resurgent auto industry has led the fastest manufacturing growth since another Clinton was President. Incomes are rising. Poverty is falling. Twenty million more Americans have health insurance.

We've doubled production of renewable energy; become the world leader in fighting climate change. Marriage equality is finally a reality from coast to coast. We brought home more of our men and women in uniform, took out Usama bin Laden. And almost every country on Earth sees America as stronger and more respected today than they did 8 years ago.

In fact, because Bill Clinton is here, I did some math, a little arithmetic. [*Laughter*] Under the last two Republican Presidents, job growth was basically flat. Deficits went up. Over our two Democratic Presidencies, jobs went up by more than 30 million, deficits went down, millions more Americans gained health insurance. So yes, with Democrats in charge, America is stronger.

Those are just the facts. And with just 1 more day to go, we now have the chance to elect a 45th President who will build on our progress, who will finish the job. Who already has the respect of leaders around the world and the people they serve. Who is smart and who is steady and who is tested. Someone who comes to this office as well prepared as anyone who has ever run, more than me, more than Bill: the next President of the United States, Hillary Clinton.

Now, I know it's been a long campaign. There's been a lot of noise and a lot of distraction. At times, it's felt more like a reality show or even a parody. [*Laughter*] But tomorrow—tomorrow, Philadelphia—the choice you face when you step into that voting booth could not be clearer and could not be more serious.

On the economy, Donald Trump is uniquely unqualified to be our chief executive. That's why most CEOs and economists don't support him. He would trigger a reckless trade war that costs jobs, strip 20 million Americans of their health insurance, roll back the new rules designed to check Wall Street recklessness and protect consumers, and would roll back the regulations we put in place to preserve this planet for our kids.

On foreign policy, Donald Trump is temperamentally unfit to be Commander in Chief. Don't take my word for it, listen to the Republicans who have refused to support him. He lacks a basic understanding of the world,

justifies torture, suggests abandoning our allies. Over the weekend, his campaign took away his Twitter account—[*laughter*]—because he's erratic. If his closest advisers don't trust him to tweet—[*laughter*]—why would any of us trust him with the nuclear codes?

More than his policies or his plans, though, throughout his campaign, Donald Trump has shown utter contempt for the values that make this Nation great. Anyone who sees women as objects, minorities and immigrants as inferior, other faiths as presumptively un-American cannot lead this diverse, dynamic, bighearted country that we love.

And so all of this should give you reason enough to vote tomorrow. But you don't just have to vote against someone, you have somebody extraordinary to vote for. Philadelphia, you've got someone outstanding to vote for in Hillary Clinton.

I'll be honest, I have had to bite my tongue after a lot of the nonsense I've heard people say about Hillary in this election. I can only imagine what Bill and Chelsea have been going through. The vicious, crazy attacks, the double standards applied to her, they're like nothing we've ever seen before. And what makes it worse is that most of the people saying this stuff, they don't really believe it. They know better. Don't forget, when Hillary was a Senator, when she was my Secretary of State, she was really popular. People saw how effective she was, how she crossed party lines to get things done. Before she announced her candidacy for President, Republican leaders described her—and I'm quoting now—as "very impressive," someone who does "a magnificent job," "one of the most effective Secretaries of State."

Well, they were right then. I agreed with Republicans then. [*Laughter*] Hillary did a great job for America. She's a big reason why we're more respected around the world. But then, when it was politically expedient, those same Republicans began tearing her down. And look, when you're subjected to unrelenting negative fire, it takes a toll. But here's the thing about Hillary. She doesn't complain. She doesn't buckle. She brushes it off. Like the American people, she is strong and tough. And she knows that government service is not about her, it's about you: your struggles, your dreams.

Throughout her career, Hillary has followed that Methodist creed her mom taught her: Do all the good you can, for all the people you can, in all the ways you can, for as long as you can. And she doesn't plan on stopping now. And that's how I know she will work her heart out for you: for everybody still in need of a good job or a raise; for every child who needs a sturdier ladder out of poverty; for every student who needs relief from student debt; every immigrant who wants to contribute to this country they love; for every American who has not yet felt the progress of these past 8 years. She will work, and she will deliver. She won't just tweet. [*Laughter*]

But she will need your help, and she'll need help in Washington. If you want Hillary to continue the progress we've made, you need to give her allies in the Senate like Katie McGinty. You cannot—there she is right there. You cannot just stick Hillary with Republicans in Congress who are already promising even more unprecedented dysfunction in Washington. That would be hard to do, but they're promising it—[*laughter*]—more shutdowns, more obstruction, years of hearings and investigations.

You know, gridlock is not mysterious; it's not something that happens because both sides are being equally unreasonable. It has been a stated Republican strategy since I took office. And the only way to break it is to make those who engage in it pay a price by electing more Democrats tomorrow.

Look at Katie McGinty's opponent, Pat Toomey.

Audience members. Boo!

The President. Don't boo!

Audience members. Vote!

The President. Vote.

I've given him credit for working with us on background checks that 90 percent of Americans supported. But that position rings hollow when he supports a Republican leader who blocked that bill. And it doesn't come close to

making up for his repeated votes to give tax cuts to the wealthy just like Donald Trump would, to block a higher minimum wage just like Donald Trump would, to repeal the Affordable Care Act just like Donald Trump would. We do not need a Trump-Toomey economy. We need someone who's never forgotten her working class roots, the daughter of a restaurant hostess and a Philadelphia beat cop, somebody who went to college with the help of scholarships and student loans. Katie McGinty won't just be with you part of the way, she'll be with you all of the way. And that's why you've got to vote for her.

Audience members. Katie! Katie! Katie!

The President. Katie!

Audience members. Katie! Katie! Katie!

The President. Pennsylvania, if you think endless gridlock will help your family, you should vote Republican. But if you believe America can do better than that, if you care about creating jobs that families can live on and childcare they can afford, if you care about equal pay for women and a higher minimum wage for workers, you need to vote for Democrats up and down the ticket: people like Hillary, people like Katie McGinty, people who will roll up their sleeves and move America forward.

Listen, I know we live in a cynical time. And I know elections and all the negative ads tend to heighten that cynicism. Just last week, a journalist asked me if I still believe the optimism I expressed that night back in Boston 12 years ago: that we were more than a collection of red and blue States; that there wasn't a liberal America or a conservative America, a Black America or a White America, there was just the United States of America. He asked me if I still held on to the hope of 2008, if I still believed in change. After all, he said, the country is so divided, Hillary is in such a close race with someone who stands in total opposition for all that you've ever stood for. Maybe your vision was misguided, he suggested, or at least, very naive.

And it was a fair question. I had to acknowledge that I hadn't fully counted on the obstruction we'd see when I first came into office and had to save the economy. I didn't anticipate the way social media would magnify our divisions and muddy up facts. None of us knew then how deep the great recession would cut and how many people would suffer and how it would make so many people anxious about their futures and their kids' futures, even after the economy recovered.

But despite all that, I told him, the answer is yes. I still believe in hope. I'm still as optimistic as ever about our future. And that's because of you, the American people. In my visits to schools and factories, war theaters, national parks, in the letters you've written me, in the tears you've shed over a lost loved one, I have seen again and again your goodness and your strength and your heart.

In 2008, you gave me a chance, a skinny guy with a funny name. [*Laughter*] And for these past 8 years, I saw how hard you worked in the face of impossible odds. I saw the values you teach your children. I saw the way you treat strangers in need. I've seen the young men and women in uniform who meet every mission and the military families who serve and sacrifice just as well and the wounded warriors who have never, ever quit.

You bet on me all those years ago, and I will always be grateful for the privilege you gave me to serve. But I'll be honest with you, I've always had the better odds, because I've always bet on you.

And, America, I'm betting on you one more time. I'm betting that tomorrow, most mom and dads across America won't cast their vote for someone who denigrates their daughters from the highest office in the land.

I'm betting that most Americans won't vote for someone who considers minorities and immigrants and people with disabilities as inferior, who considers people who practice different faiths as objects of suspicion. I'm betting that tomorrow, true conservatives won't cast their vote for someone with no regard for the Constitution.

I'm betting that young people turn out to vote because your future is at stake. I'm betting that men across this country will have no problem voting for the more qualified

candidate who happens to be a woman. I'm betting that African Americans will vote in big numbers because this journey we've been on was never about the color of a President, but the content of his or her character.

I'm betting that America will reject a politics of resentment and a politics of blame and choose a politics that says we are stronger together. I am betting that tomorrow, you will reject fear and you'll choose hope. I'm betting that the wisdom and decency and generosity of the American people will once again win the day. And that is a bet that I have never, ever lost.

Philadelphia, in this place where our Founders forged the documents of freedom, in this place where they gave us the tools to perfect our Union, if you share my faith, then I ask you to vote. If you want a President who shares our faith in America, who's lived that faith in America, who will finally shatter a glass ceiling and be a President for each and every one of us, then I'm asking you to work as hard as you can, this 1 last day, to elect, my fellow Americans, this fighter, this stateswoman, this mother, this grandmother, this patriot: our next President of the United States of America, Hillary Clinton.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:42 p.m. on Independence Mall. In his remarks, he referred to former Presidents George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush; Chelsea Clinton, daughter of Democratic Presidential nominee Clinton; former U.S. Ambassador to China Jon M. Huntsman, Jr.; Sens. Johnny Isakson and Lindsey O. Graham; and Ta-Nehisi P. Coates, national correspondent, the Atlantic magazine. The First Lady referred to former President William J. Clinton, who introduced her.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction
November 8, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice, stating that the national emergency with respect to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction that was declared in Executive Order 12938 is to continue in effect beyond November 14, 2016.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks on the Presidential Election
November 9, 2016

The President. Good afternoon, everybody. Yesterday, before votes were tallied, I shot a video that some of you may have seen in which I said to the American people: Regardless of which side you were on in the election, regardless of whether your candidate won or lost, the Sun would come up in the morning.

And that is one bit of prognosticating that actually came true. The Sun is up. And I know everybody had a long night. I did as well. I had a chance to talk to President-elect Trump last

night—about 3:30 in the morning, I think it was—to congratulate him on winning the election. And I had a chance to invite him to come to the White House tomorrow to talk about making sure that there is a successful transition between our Presidencies.

Now, it is no secret that the President-elect and I have some pretty significant differences. But remember, 8 years ago, President Bush and I had some pretty significant differences. But President Bush's team could not have been more professional or more gracious in making sure we had a smooth transition so that we could hit the ground running. And one thing you realize quickly in this job is that the Presidency—and the Vice Presidency—is bigger than any of us.

So I have instructed my team to follow the example that President Bush's team set 8 years ago and work as hard as we can to make sure that this is a successful transition for the President-elect, because we are now all rooting for his success in uniting and leading the country. The peaceful transition of power is one of the hallmarks of our democracy. And over the next few months, we are going to show that to the world.

I also had a chance last night to speak with Secretary Clinton, and I just had a chance to hear her remarks. I could not be prouder of her. She has lived an extraordinary life of public service. She was a great First Lady. She was an outstanding Senator for the State of New York. And she could not have been a better Secretary of State. I'm proud of her. A lot of Americans look up to her. Her candidacy and nomination was historic and sends a message to our daughters all across the country that they can achieve at the highest levels of politics. And I am absolutely confident that she and President Clinton will continue to do great work for people here in the United States and all around the world.

Now, everybody is sad when their side loses an election. But the day after, we have to remember that we're actually all on one team. This is an intramural scrimmage. We're not Democrats first. We're not Republicans first. We are Americans first. We're patriots first. We all want what's best for this country. That's what I heard in Mr. Trump's remarks last night. That's what I heard when I spoke to him directly. And I was heartened by that. That's what the country needs: a sense of unity; a sense of inclusion; a respect for our institutions, our way of life, rule of law; and a respect for each other. I hope that he maintains that spirit throughout this transition, and I certainly hope that's how his Presidency has a chance to begin.

I also told my team today to keep their heads up, because the remarkable work that they have done day in, day out—often without a lot of fanfare, often with a lot of attention—work in agencies, work in obscure areas of policy that make Government run better and make it more responsive and make it more efficient and make it more service friendly so that it's actually helping more people, that remarkable work has left the next President with a stronger, better country than the one that existed 8 years ago.

So, win or lose in this election, that was always our mission. That was our mission from day one. And everyone on my team should be extraordinarily proud of everything that they have done, and so should all the Americans that I've had a chance to meet all across this country who do the hard work of building on that progress every single day: teachers in schools; doctors in ER clinic; small businesses putting their all into starting something up, making sure they're treating their employees well; all the important work that's done by moms and dads and families and congregations in every State—the work of perfecting this Union.

So this was a long and hard-fought campaign. A lot of our fellow Americans are exultant today. A lot of Americans are less so. But that's the nature of campaigns. That's the nature of democracy. It is hard and sometimes contentious and noisy, and it's not always inspiring.

But to the young people who got into politics for the first time and may be disappointed by the results, I just want you to know, you have to stay encouraged. Don't get cynical.

Don't ever think you can't make a difference. As Secretary Clinton said this morning, fighting for what is right is worth it.

Sometimes, you lose an argument. Sometimes, you lose an election. The path that this country has taken has never been a straight line. We zig and zag, and sometimes, we move in ways that some people think is forward and others think is moving back. And that's okay. I've lost elections before. Joe hasn't. [*Laughter*] But you know—[*laughter*].

[*At this point, Vice President Joe Biden made the sign of the cross.*]

The President. So I've been sort of——

Vice President Biden. Remember, you beat me badly. [*Laughter*]

The President. That's the way politics works sometimes. We try really hard to persuade people that we're right. And then, people vote. And then, if we lose, we learn from our mistakes, we do some reflection, we lick our wounds, we brush ourselves off, we get back in the arena. We go at it. We try even harder the next time.

The point, though, is, is that we all go forward, with a presumption of good faith in our fellow citizens, because that presumption of good faith is essential to a vibrant and functioning democracy. That's how this country has moved forward for 240 years. It's how we've pushed boundaries and promoted freedom around the world. That's how we've expanded the rights of our founding to reach all of our citizens. It's how we have come this far.

And that's why I'm confident that this incredible journey that we're on as Americans will go on. And I am looking forward to doing everything that I can to make sure that the next President is successful in that. I have said before, I think of this job as being a relay runner. You take the baton, you run your best race, and hopefully, by the time you hand it off, you're a little further ahead; you've made a little progress. And I can say that we've done that, and I want to make sure that handoff is well executed, because ultimately, we're all on the same team.

All right? Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:20 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Burundi

November 9, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13712 of November 22, 2015, with respect to the situation in Burundi, is to continue in effect beyond November 22, 2016.

The situation in Burundi, which has been marked by the killing of and violence against civilians, unrest, the incitement of violence, and significant political repression, and which threatens the peace, security, and stability of Burundi, continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13712 with respect to the situation in Burundi.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Following a Meeting With President-Elect Donald J. Trump
November 10, 2016

The President. Well, I just had the opportunity to have an excellent conversation with President-elect Trump. It was wide ranging. We talked about some of the organizational issues in setting up a White House. We talked about foreign policy. We talked about domestic policy. And as I said last night, my number-one priority in the coming 2 months is to try to facilitate a transition that ensures our President-elect is successful.

And I have been very encouraged by the, I think, interest in President-elect Trump's wanting to work with my team around many of the issues that this great country faces. And I believe that it is important for all of us, regardless of party and regardless of political preferences, to now come together, work together, to deal with the many challenges that we face.

And in the meantime, Michelle has had a chance to greet the incoming First Lady. And we had an excellent conversation with her as well, and we want to make sure that they feel welcome as they prepare to make this transition.

And most of all, I want to emphasize to you, Mr. President-elect, that we now are going to want to do everything we can to help you succeed, because if you succeed, then the country succeeds.

Please go ahead.

President-elect Trump. Well, thank you very much, President Obama. This was a meeting that was going to last for maybe 10 or 15 minutes, and we were just going to get to know each other. We had never met each other. I have great respect. The meeting lasted for almost an hour and a half. And it could have—as far as I'm concerned, it could have gone on for a lot longer.

We really—we discussed a lot of different situations, some wonderful and some difficulties. I very much look forward to dealing with the President in the future, including counsel. He has—he explained some of the difficulties, some of the high-flying assets and some of the really great things that have been achieved.

So, Mr. President, it was a great honor being with you, and I look forward to being with you many, many more times in the future.

The President. Good. All right.

President-elect Trump. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:36 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Melania Trump, wife of President-elect Trump.

Remarks Honoring the National Basketball Association Champion Cleveland Cavaliers
November 10, 2016

The President. Hello, everybody! Welcome to the White House, and give it up for the World Champion Cleveland Cavaliers! That's right, I said "World Champion" and "Cleveland" in the same sentence. [*Laughter*] That's what we're talking about when we talk about hope and change. [*Laughter*]

We've got a lot of big Cavs fans here in the house, including Ohio's Governor, John Kasich, and his daughters Emma and Reese. We've got some outstanding Members of Congress that are here. And obviously, we want to recognize Cavs owner Dan Gilbert, who put so much of himself into trying to make sure this thing worked. One of the great general managers of the game, David Griffin. And the pride and joy of Mexico, Missouri—[*laughter*]—Coach Tyronn Lue.

I also, before I go any further, want to give a special thanks to J.R. Smith's shirt for showing up. [*Laughter*] I wasn't sure if it was going to make an appearance today. I'm glad you came. You're a very nice shirt. [*Laughter*]

Now, last season, the Cavs were the favorites in the East all along, but the road was anything but stable. And I'm not even talking about what happened on the court. There were rumors about who was getting along with who, and why somebody wasn't in a picture, and LeBron is tweeting—[*laughter*]—and this was all big news. But somehow Coach Lue comes in and everything starts getting a little smoother, and they hit their stride in the playoffs. Yes, everybody can sit down, I'll be here for a while. [*Laughter*]

They start winning their first 10 games in the playoffs, setting record after record for 3-point shooting. But obviously, what this all comes down to is a team that, for the first time in NBA history, comes back from being down 3–1 in the Finals, the first team in history to dig themselves out of a hole like that.

And I should add that by knocking off the Warriors, they cemented the 1996 Bulls as the greatest team of all time. [*Laughter*] So your President thanks you for that. Now——

[*At this point, a baby cried.*]

Vice President Joe Biden. Crying.

The President. I know, that's funny, isn't it? [*Laughter*] Yes, it is. See, everybody is happy when their team wins.

The comeback was remarkable—and you learn about people when they're down—against a historically good Warriors team. Cavs won games 5 and 6 by double digits. You had both LeBron James and Kyrie Irving becoming the first duo ever to score 40 points apiece in a Finals game. And then, in game 7, the Cavs fall behind on the road, only to fight back and lock up the title with an unbelievable 2 minutes. There was "The Block," what LeBron has said was the defining play of his career; "The Shot" by Kyrie, putting the Cavs up 5; "The Stop" by Kevin Love. Boy, I mean, Kevin was moving. [*Laughter*] I hadn't seen defense like that.

But it wasn't just those outstanding players, not then and not throughout the year, because this was always a team effort. J.R. always seemed to hit those shots—you know, "No, no, don't shoot that!" and then it goes in and, "Man, that was a great shot." [*Laughter*]

You've got Tristan Thompson who has as great of a motor as anybody and put in extra work to teach himself how to shoot free throws with the wrong hand. I should have tried that with some bill signings around here. [*Laughter*] You've got Channing Frye, who came in right over the trading deadline and changed the tone of the locker room, and his sharpshooting. Richard Jefferson, Dahntay Jones, providing leadership and giving inspiration to all of us old people that you can still do something at that age.

Iman Shumpert, playing not only great defense and scoring, but also delivered his wife's baby in the bathtub—[*laughter*]—using a pair of headphones to tie off the umbilical cord. Now, that's something right there. [*Laughter*] That was an all-star move. Got the "MacGyver" flat top, which we miss. [*Laughter*]

And, of course, there's the guy LeBron calls the favorite player—his favorite player of all time, James Jones. The two are a package deal: six straight Finals appearances. Their names even go together: LeBron James Jones. [*Laughter*]

But the truth is, LeBron wouldn't be LeBron without his teammates: Kyrie, Kevin, Tristan. Michelle's brother, who was an excellent basketball player, always says that you can learn a lot about somebody's character by the way they play basketball. And when you see LeBron James, it is not just his power and his speed and his vertical. It is his unselfishness, it is his work ethic, it is his insistence on always making the right play, it is his determination—all of which makes him one of the great players of all time.

And you saw it in those last three games, put up some of the most staggering statistics in Finals history. He did it the year before despite injuries, dragging his team along to make a very competitive series. You saw it when this kid from Akron broke down and fell to his knees when he'd realized that he had finally fulfilled a promise that he had made all those years ago and delivered that championship back to Northeast Ohio.

So this is a player and this is a team that knows what this title means to Cleveland. This is a city that's, throughout sports history, been

through a lot: "The Fumble," "The Drive," Jordan over Ehlo. A whole lot more. [*Laughter*] But through it all, Cleveland was always "Believeland."

And that's why the Cavs have always given back to their fans and the community that's been so loyal to them. Over the last 22 years, they've given more than $23 million to local charities. And more than just the money: players and coaches have made about 200 visits annually to schools, hospitals, food kitchens, and more, including assisting educational programs that reach more than 100,000 kids in Northeast Ohio.

And these Cavs exemplify a growing generation of athletes that are using their platforms to speak out. We've seen Kevin on combating campus sexual assault; LeBron on issues like gun violence and working with Michelle to help more kids go to school, go to college. His foundation is doing something incredible: paying college tuition for 1,100 kids from Akron. I should mention that, as we were walking out, Dan Gilbert has been unbelievable in the work he's been doing in Detroit—his hometown—and giving back.

And finally, earlier today the Cavs met with Attorney General Loretta Lynch and my Senior Adviser, Valerie Jarrett, to discuss steps they're taking to help build understanding between law enforcement and the Cleveland community, part of a leaguewide effort to build stronger communities all across the country, including holding open conversations so we can begin to bridge divides and defuse tensions, and see each other as one American family. It's really important work. It's one—just one of a number of recent efforts we've been proud to partner with the NBA during my time as President.

From the league's support of "My Brother's Keeper" initiative, to the mentoring initiatives, to Michelle's "Let's Move!" and Joining Forces efforts, the NBA has been a model for positive change, and the fact that it's not just a responsibility of Government, it takes all of us—businesses, nonprofits, athletes, role models—working together to achieve the progress that we seek.

So I know that Cleveland could not be happier and prouder of having this trophy. But this was already a championship group of guys, even before last year, and you should be very proud of them.

Give it up for the world champs one last time.

Dan, you want to say anything? You guys got anything to say? Come on, Kevin.

Forward Kevin W. Love. So, from the 2016 World Champion Cleveland Cavaliers, we wanted to present this '16 Obama jersey.

The President. I like this.

Mr. Love. Come on, guys. You got anything else?

The President. The—now, the only thing is, though, I don't—these sleeves get tight. Can I tear these out? [*Laughter*] Can I rip them?

Mr. Love. You can rip them.

The President. Can I rip them?

Mr. Love. LeBron rips them.

Forward LeBron R. James. I'll show you exactly how to do it. [*Laughter*]

The President. I'm joking.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:27 p.m. on the South Portico at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Earl J. "J.R." Smith III, Kyrie A. Irving, and Iman A. Shumpert, guards, Channing T. Frye and Richard A. Jefferson, forwards, Tristan T.J. Thompson, center, Dahntay L. Jones and James D. Jones, small forwards/guards, and Joel C. Ehlo, former guard, Cleveland Cavaliers; Teyana Taylor, wife of Mr. Shumpert, and their daughter Iman Tayla "Junie" Shumpert; and Michael Jordan, former guard, NBA's Chicago Bulls, and principal owner, NBA's Charlotte Hornets. He also referred to his brother-in-law Craig M. Robinson.

Memorandum on Advancing Fair Practices by Education and Training Institutions Serving Servicemembers, Veterans, Eligible Spouses, and Other Family Members

November 10, 2016

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Advancing Fair Practices by Education and Training Institutions Serving Service Members, Veterans, Eligible Spouses, and Other Family Members

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, I hereby direct the following:

Section 1. Purpose. This memorandum directs executive departments and agencies (agencies) to perform certain functions to further strengthen the Federal Government's work in promoting fair practices by education and training institutions serving service members, veterans, eligible spouses, and other family members.

Sec. 2. Background. Throughout my Administration, I have prioritized efforts to ensure that we are fulfilling our promises to all those who have served. I have called upon my Administration to do all we can to ensure that our service members, veterans, eligible spouses, and other family members who have given so much to our Nation have the protections, resources, information, and support they need in order to pursue the American dream. Available data show that approximately 200,000 service members transition from military service annually to pursue careers, start businesses, or enroll in postsecondary institutions. Since its enactment, the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 (Title V of Public Law 110–252) (Post-9/11 GI Bill) has provided more than 1.7 million individuals with $68.9 billion in education benefits. In addition, the Department of Defense's Tuition Assistance Program continues to provide service members, veterans, eligible spouses, and other family members access to high-quality education.

On April 27, 2012, I signed Executive Order 13607 (Establishing Principles of Excellence for Educational Institutions Serving Service Members, Veterans, Spouses, and Other Family Members). The "Principles of Excellence" set forth in that order apply to institutions receiving Federal and military educational funding and are designed to strengthen oversight, enforcement, and accountability within Federal military and veterans educational and training benefits programs. Institutions receiving Federal and military educational funding must, among other requirements, 1) provide meaningful information to service members, veterans, eligible spouses, and other family members regarding the cost and quality of educational institutions to assist prospective students in making choices about how to use Federal educational benefits; 2) prevent abusive and deceptive recruiting practices that target the recipients of Federal military and veterans educational benefits; and 3) ensure that they provide high-quality academic and student support services to active-duty service members, reservists, members of the National Guard, veterans, and military families.

Agencies have since made significant strides toward fully implementing the Principles of Excellence. They have released guidelines clarifying obligations under the Principles of Excellence; launched the GI Bill Comparison Tool to allow individuals to calculate estimated Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits, research school attributes, and compare educational institutions; created a centralized complaint system for students receiving Federal military and education benefits to further strengthen the integrity and accountability of these programs; launched "Tuition Assistance DECIDE," a tool that enables service members to search for information about educational costs and outcomes tailored to their circumstances; developed comprehensive veteran-student outcome mea-

sures; and strengthened data and information sharing across agencies to further these goals.

Although thousands of institutions have committed to the Principles of Excellence, more work remains to strengthen oversight, enforcement, and accountability within these benefits programs so that these critical investments are protected and can continue to serve our service members, veterans, their eligible spouses, and other family members. To accomplish these goals, we must continue to improve the coordination of Federal tools and resources, provide new mechanisms to increase collaboration across Federal agencies, identify best practices that can support and inform initiatives to enhance educational and career readiness and success, implement better data-sharing strategies, and develop more streamlined protocols to improve enforcement and information sharing.

Therefore, today I am directing agencies to take additional steps to ensure fair practices in education and training institutions serving veterans and service members by implementing the policies described in this memorandum. In addition, I am directing the creation of an interagency working group to further implement the policies and priorities described in this memorandum.

Sec. 3. Policy. It is the policy of the Federal Government to provide service members, veterans, eligible spouses, and other family members with the information and support they need in order to make informed decisions about their education and training options throughout the military life cycle, both during their transition from the military to civilian life, and after their separation from the military. It is also the policy of the Federal Government to improve resources for veterans while they are enrolled in school or a training program, and to protect students and taxpayers from the subset of institutions of higher education that engage in fraudulent, deceptive, and other predatory practices that harm students. Compiling accurate and reliable data is a critical part of strengthening this work and achieving better outcomes for service members, veterans, eligible spouses, and other family members, and it is the policy of the Federal Government to have appropriate mechanisms in place to facilitate data sharing among agencies. These policies build on the following statutes, Presidential directives, and initiatives:

(a) The VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 (Title II of Public Law 112–56) (the "VOW Act") brought about the first redesign of the Department of Defense's Transition Assistance Program (TAP) in over 20 years. Seven Federal agencies—the Departments of Defense, Education, Labor, Veterans Affairs, and Homeland Security, the Small Business Administration, and the Office of Personnel Management—and the military branches coordinated efforts to launch the revamped TAP in 2013, in order to serve over 200,000 eligible transitioning service members annually. TAP provides key information, tools, and training to service members, eligible spouses, and eligible dependents to help prepare them for civilian life, whether they are pursuing education, searching for employment, or starting a business.

(b) Public Law 112–249 (commonly referred to as the Improving Transparency of Education Opportunities for Veterans Act of 2012), requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to develop a comprehensive policy to improve outreach and transparency to service members and veterans. The Department of Veterans Affairs memorialized that comprehensive outreach and transparency policy in a report to the Congress in April 2013.

(c) Executive Order 13607 (Establishing Principles of Excellence for Educational Institutions Serving Service Members, Veterans, Spouses, and Other Family Members), signed on April 27, 2012, directs the Departments of Defense, Education, and Veterans Affairs to establish Principles of Excellence to ensure that educational institutions receiving funding from Federal education and training resources, including the Post-9/11 GI Bill and the Tuition Assistance Program, provide meaningful information to service members, veterans, eligible spouses, and other family members when making choices about their Federal educational benefits. This order was a direct response to

reports of aggressive and deceptive recruiting of this population by some educational institutions.

(d) Presidential Study Directive/PSD–9, issued in May 2010, directed the development of a coordinated Federal Government-wide approach to supporting military families. That approach was memorialized in a January 2011 report, "Strengthening Our Military Families: Meeting America's Commitment," that identifies priority areas for addressing the concerns and challenges facing military families, including developing career and educational opportunities for military spouses by increasing access to educational advancement and by reducing barriers to employment caused by different State policies and standards.

(e) The "8 Keys to Veterans' Success" initiative, a voluntary initiative announced in August 2013 by the Departments of Education and Veterans Affairs, identifies specific steps that postsecondary institutions can commit to take to assist service members and veterans to transition to the classroom, complete their postsecondary programs, and obtain career skills that will help them succeed upon graduation.

(f) The Military Credentialing and Licensing Task Force, established in 2012 at my direction by the Department of Defense, focuses on identifying opportunities for service members to earn civilian occupational credentials and licenses without the need for additional training. All branches of the military worked with manufacturing credentialing agencies to enable up to 126,000 service members to gain industry-recognized, nationally portable certifications for high-demand manufacturing jobs.

Sec. 4. Strengthening Interagency Coordination.

(a) Federal Interagency Working Group. There is hereby established an interagency Working Group on Fair Practices in Veterans Education and Training Programs (Working Group), to be co-chaired by the Director of the National Economic Council (NEC) and the Director of the Domestic Policy Council (DPC), or their designees. The Working Group shall also include an agency Co-Chair, to be rotated annually among the Secretaries of Defense, Labor, Education, and Veterans Affairs, or their designees. The Working Group will coordinate the development and execution of policy proposals to further the goals outlined in this memorandum. The Working Group may consult and engage with other Federal interagency working groups as appropriate to ensure that related activities are coordinated. The Working Group shall meet at least quarterly.

(b) Representation. In addition to the NEC and DPC, the Working Group shall include representatives from:

(i) the Department of Defense;
(ii) the Department of Justice;
(iii) the Department of Labor;
(iv) the Department of Education;
(v) the Department of Veterans Affairs;
(vi) the Department of Homeland Security;
(vii) the Small Business Administration;
(viii) the Office of Personnel Management;
(ix) the National Security Council staff; and
(x) any other Federal agencies, offices, or initiatives invited to participate by the Co-Chairs.

Sec. 5. Fair Practices for Education and Training Institutions Serving Service Members and Veterans. Building on the policies that are detailed in section 3 of this memorandum, and to the extent permitted by law, the relevant agencies shall develop and implement actions and initiatives as set forth below to promote fair practices in education and training institutions serving service members, veterans, eligible spouses, and other family members to ensure that they are treated fairly in using their Federal education benefits. These actions and initiatives should help ensure better educational outcomes by enhancing front-end counseling programs and improving online consumer tools to help students make informed decisions regarding education programs; executing data linking agreements among Federal agencies to improve information sharing on student outcome measures; and developing new measures to combat continued deceptive and predatory practices by certain institutions of higher education.

(a) The Department of Education shall establish a pilot program and a corresponding evaluation, in consultation with the Departments of Defense, Veterans Affairs, and Homeland Security (with respect to the United States Coast Guard, as appropriate), to test how improved personalized information, tools, and counseling resources for transitioning service members can promote informed choices for those enrolling in postsecondary education and training. The agencies shall collaborate on the design and evaluation of this pilot, and use technical assistance, data, and resources from the TAP, Chapter 31 Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Chapter 36 Career and Education Counseling Services of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and other outreach, loan counseling, grant programs, or research initiatives of the agencies to meet this need. The Departments of Defense, Education, Veterans Affairs, and Homeland Security shall enter into an agreement that sets forth the terms for launching this pilot program and evaluation not later than 180 days from the date of this memorandum. This agreement shall specify an appropriate cost-sharing arrangement consistent with applicable appropriations laws and other legal requirements.

(b) The Departments of Defense, Labor, Education, and Veterans Affairs, with other Working Group members as appropriate, shall develop a plan to establish a data linkage across agencies. The data-linkage plan shall include aggregated information and shall enable individuals to view information about career experiences of beneficiaries before and after their education and training programs; compare beneficiaries' outcome information to those of eligible non-participating veterans; enable more transparent information about other beneficiaries' educational attainment, student debt levels, and loan default rates; and identify educational paths under the Post-9/11 GI Bill that yield the best return on investment in the civilian workforce. The data-linkage plan shall include an appropriate cost-sharing arrangement that is consistent with applicable appropriations laws and other legal requirements. This plan shall be established not later than 180 days from the date of this memorandum.

(c) The Department of Education and the Department of Veterans Affairs shall take steps to strengthen existing online consumer awareness and educational benefits tools, including the Department of Education's College Scorecard and the Department of Veterans Affairs' GI Bill Comparison Tool, to facilitate access to school performance information, consumer protection information, and key Federal financial aid documents. Consistent with the Paperwork Reduction Act and other applicable statutes, these strengthened tools shall provide accessible and reliable national data on students' outcomes at specific colleges, including aggregated information on former students' earnings, graduates' student debt, and borrowers' repayment rates. Additionally, strengthening these tools shall improve dissemination of public information regarding institutions pertaining to investigations conducted or punitive action taken by Federal or State agencies concerning such institutions. These tools shall be updated not later than 180 days from the date of this memorandum, and shall be further updated at least annually thereafter.

(d) The Working Group shall promote the enhancement and implementation of military apprenticeship programs. The military services have taken numerous steps to strengthen and enhance the ability of service members to obtain skills and credentials that can serve them after their military career. Beginning in 2012, the Military Credentialing and Licensing Task Force conducted pilot credentialing programs in transportation and logistics, healthcare support, mechanical work, information technology, and manufacturing that proved very successful. These efforts need to be further institutionalized and amplified. To this end, the Secretary of Defense is directed to:

> (i) in consultation with the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Education, and the Secretary of Homeland Security (with respect to the United States Coast Guard, as appropriate), develop a plan to enhance and implement military apprenticeship programs that provide opportunities for

service members to improve their job skills and obtain industry-recognized credentials and certificates of completion for registered apprenticeship programs while on active duty. Strengthening the connections between military training, education, and transition activities registered apprenticeship programs could significantly improve employment opportunities for service members after separation from the service and help employers find qualified workers from this skilled workforce. This plan shall be prepared not later than 180 days from the date of this memorandum; and

(ii) consider ways to expand the current United Services Military Apprenticeship Program to include all of the services, to increase its use among the services currently included, and to increase the number of service members who gain valuable training and industry-recognized credentials through registered apprenticeship programs. The Secretary of Defense is also directed to consider establishing targets for the number of apprenticeships in each service. The Secretary of Defense shall include an update on these considerations in the plan referenced in section 5(d)(i) of this memorandum.

(e) The Working Group shall work to enhance opportunities for service members to obtain credentials and licenses that are recognized by civilian employers in an effort to expand employment opportunities for those service members after separation from service, and to reduce barriers to employment caused by state occupational licensing requirements for military spouses and for service members transitioning to civilian jobs.

To these ends, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Homeland Security (with respect to the United States Coast Guard, as appropriate), in consultation with the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Education, and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, shall:

(i) strengthen the opportunities available for service members under the current program to assist members of the Armed Forces in obtaining professional credentials, as set forth at 10 U.S.C. 2015. These efforts should include working with the Congress to remove program restrictions under which members of the Armed Forces may only obtain credentials that relate to skills and training incident to the performance of the service member's military duties (where consistent with each of the armed service branches' operational needs), and to simplify the requirements relating to credentialing programs to increase the range of credentialing opportunities while maintaining quality assurance. These important changes would enhance the program's flexibility by empowering service members to obtain credentials related to occupations that are in-demand in the civilian economy but that may not directly relate to the specific military duties of the service member, with the effect of significantly expanding the service member's civilian employment opportunities;

(ii) explore the development and use of performance measures for the military credentialing and licensing program set forth at 10 U.S.C. 2015. Such performance measures would be designed to assess the effectiveness of the program, enhance accountability, and strengthen coordination with other Federal job training and education programs. The Secretary of Defense is directed to consider the feasibility of applying to the program performance measures that are applicable to other Federal job training programs, including measures such as credential attainment, entry into civilian employment, and aggregated information on earnings of service members who attained credentials in the military. The Secretary of Defense also may consider other appropriate performance measures, such as the impact of civilian credential attainment on the annual perfor-

mance reviews of service members who have completed civilian credentials while on active duty. The Secretary of Defense may carry out pilot or demonstration projects to determine how Federal agencies may collaborate with each other and, where appropriate, the States, to exchange data needed for compiling performance measures on separating service members who obtained civilian credentials while on active duty. Any pilot or demonstration projects the Secretary of Defense chooses to carry out should be accompanied by an evaluation component sufficient to determine whether and how to take the pilot or demonstration project to scale;

(iii) develop a plan to strengthen the 10 U.S.C. 2015 credentialing program, which shall include recommendations to implement performance measures and to work with the Congress to broaden and simplify the program as described above, and they shall provide an update on such plan to the Co-Chairs of the Working Group within 180 days of the date of this memorandum; and

(iv) expand efforts to reduce barriers to employment for military spouses and transitioning service members caused by restrictive state occupational licensing requirements. The Federal Government has taken numerous steps to quantify and reduce employment barriers caused by occupational licensing requirements, including by publishing the February 2012 report "Supporting Our Military Families: Best Practices for Streamlining Occupational Licensing Across State Lines," and the July 2015 report "Occupational Licensing: A Framework for Policymakers." The VOW Act also authorized the Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training at the Department of Labor to carry out a demonstration project that engages States in efforts to streamline veterans' credentialing and licensing, and outcomes from that demonstration project were published in a September 2015 report. The Working Group shall expand on these efforts by coordinating and cooperating with States in implementing strategies demonstrated to be successful in removing barriers to veterans' licensing and certification, and by conducting additional research as appropriate into how to further reduce barriers caused by state occupational licensing requirements.

(f) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education, shall develop a legislative proposal to amend the Post-9/11 GI Bill to ensure that veterans who use their Post-9/11 GI Bill entitlement to take credentialing and licensing tests are charged against entitlement based on the actual costs of each test, and not a minimum of a full month of entitlement (as current law provides). The Secretary of Veterans Affairs should also develop legislative proposals to allow entitlements to be used to cover the costs of other tests or assessment processes that evaluate prior learning and knowledge or provide an opportunity for course credit at an institution of higher learning. These legislative proposals shall be developed and presented to the Co-Chairs of the Working Group not later than 180 days from the date of this memorandum.

(g) The Working Group shall develop standard protocols across agencies to ensure that nongovernmental websites are not deceptively and fraudulently marketing educational services and benefits to program beneficiaries. This effort shall include establishing procedures to protect the term "GI Bill" and other military or veterans-related terms. These protocols and procedures shall be developed within 120 days from the date of this memorandum.

(h) The Department of Defense, the Department of Justice, the Department of Education, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and other interested Working Group members shall establish an enforcement subcommittee of the Working Group to focus on improving the handling of service member and veteran-student complaints; deterring false or misleading advertising by educational institutions or

others concerning their education benefits; advancing protocols for removing non-compliant schools from the Principles of Excellence, or developing other appropriate measures to protect the integrity and accuracy of information about this initiative; and developing a common set of early-warning protocols and accountability measures to improve performance by educational institutions on behalf of service members and veterans. This subcommittee shall be established not later than 120 days from the date of this memorandum. This subcommittee shall coordinate with the interagency oversight task force on career colleges and for-profit educational institutions, established by the Department of Education in May 2015, to avoid overlap and duplication of efforts.

Sec. 6. Federal Agency Implementation Plan. Within 120 days of the issuance of this memorandum, the Working Group shall establish an implementation plan setting forth specific actions that are needed to further the policy objectives identified in this memorandum and that are permitted by law. The implementation plan shall identify the steps necessary to implement the policies and meet the deadlines identified in section 5 of this memorandum. In addition, the implementation plan may identify other agency-specific actions not included in this memorandum that the Working Group should undertake to further promote fair practices in education and training institutions serving service members, veterans, eligible spouses, and other family members.

Sec. 7. General Provisions. (a) This memorandum shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.

(b) Nothing in this memorandum shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

(i) the authority granted by law to an executive department, agency, or the head thereof; or

(ii) the functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budgetary, administrative, or legislative proposals.

(c) This memorandum is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

BARACK OBAMA

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting Budget Amendments for Fiscal Year 2017
November 10, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Budget amendments for national security activities at the Department of Defense (DOD), the Department of State (State), and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to fund Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO).

These amendments would provide $5.8 billion for DOD OCO activities to support the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces, and to degrade and ultimately defeat the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), including through military operations as part of Operation Inherent Resolve. For State and USAID, a total of $5.8 billion would support the Administration's counter-ISIL and counterterrorism objectives, including the efforts to implement the diplomatic engagement, governance, and stabilization components of my Administration's counter-ISIL strategy, strengthen embassy security, and respond to relief and recovery needs, as well as provide additional humanitarian assistance for areas liberated from ISIL and other unforeseen needs.

Overall, these amendments would increase the OCO funding requested for FY 2017 by

$11.6 billion, for a total FY 2017 OCO request of $85.3 billion. Consistent with last year's bipartisan budget agreement, these amendments would provide equal funding increases for defense and non-defense security programs.

The details of these amendments are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

While these amendments focus on funding our overseas national security efforts, our efforts here at home are equally important to fighting terrorism and protecting the American people. For this reason, I urge the Congress to fully fund not only the international security needs outlined in this request, but also the domestic security programs included in the FY 2017 Budget. Specifically, the Congress should fund critical cybersecurity programs and ensure the Nation has the resources needed to aggressively counter evolving cybersecurity threats. I also encourage the Congress to provide the resources necessary for the Department of Homeland Security's Transportation Security Administration and its Countering Violent Extremism programs.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

Remarks at a Veterans Day Ceremony in Arlington, Virginia
November 11, 2016

Thank you very much. Please—thank you. Thank you. Please—thank you.

Secretary McDonald, Mr. Hallinan, distinguished guests and, most of all, our extraordinary veterans and your families: The last time I stood on these hallowed grounds, on Memorial Day, our country came together to honor those who have fought and died for our flag. A few days before, our Nation observed Armed Forces Day, honoring all who are serving under that flag at this moment.

And today, on Veterans Day, we honor those who honored our country with its highest form of service: You who once wore the uniform of our Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, or Coast Guard. We owe you our thanks, we owe you our respect, and we owe you our freedom.

We come together to express our profound gratitude for the sacrifices and contributions you and your family made on the battlefield, at home, and at outposts around the world. But America's gratitude to our veterans is something always grounded in something greater than what you did on duty. It's also an appreciation of the example that you continue to set after your service has ended: your example as citizens.

Veterans Day often follows a hard-fought political campaign, an exercise in the free speech and self-government that you fought for. It often lays bare disagreements across our Nation. But the American instinct has never been to find isolation in opposite corners. It is to find strength in our common creed, to forge unity from our great diversity, to sustain that strength and unity even when it is hard. And when the election is over, as we search for ways to come together—to reconnect with one another and with the principles that are more enduring than transitory politics—some of our best examples are the men and women we salute on Veterans Day.

It's the example of young Americans—our 9/11 generation—who, as first responders, ran into smoldering towers, then ran to a recruiting center and signed up to serve. It's the example of a military that meets every mission, one united team, all looking out for one another, all getting each other's backs. It's the example of the single most diverse institution in our country: soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and coastguardsmen who represent every corner of our country, every shade of humanity, immigrant and native-born, Christian, Muslim, Jew, and nonbeliever alike, all forged into common service.

It's the example of our veterans—patriots—who, when they take off their fatigues, put back on the camouflage of everyday life in America and become our business partners and bosses, our teachers and our coaches, our first responders, city council members, community leaders,

role models, all still serving this country we love with the same sense of duty and with valor.

A few years ago, a middle school student from Missouri entered an essay contest about why veterans are special. This is what he wrote: "When I think of a veteran, I think of men or women who will be the first to help an elderly lady across the street. I also think of someone who will defend everyone, regardless of their race, age, gender, hair color, or other discriminations." [*Laughter*] After 8 years in office, I particularly appreciate that he included hair color. [*Laughter*] But that middle schooler is right. Our veterans are still the first to help, still the first to serve.

They are women like the retired military policewoman from Buffalo who founded an AMVETS post in her community and is now building a safe place for homeless female veterans with children. They are men like the two veterans from Tennessee—one in his fifties, one in his sixties—who wrote me to say they would happily suit up and ship out if we needed them. "We might be just a little old," they wrote, "but we will be proud to go and do what we were taught to do." Whenever the world makes you cynical, whenever you seek true humility and selflessness, look to a veteran.

Look to someone like First Lieutenant Irving Lerner. Irving was born in Chicago to Russian Jewish immigrants during World War I. He served as a bombardier in the Army Air Corps, flying dozens of missions toward the end of World War II.

When he returned home, Irving did what a lot of veterans do. He put his medals away, he kept humble about his service, started living a quiet life. One fall day, walking down Sheffield Avenue on Chicago's North Side, a stranger stopped him. He said, "Thank you for your service," and he handed him a ticket to see the Cubs play in the World Series. [*Laughter*] Now, it's a good thing Irving took that ticket—[*laughter*]—because it would be a while until his next chance. [*Laughter*]

Irving worked hard, managing the warehouses for his brother-in-law's tire company. He got married, to a sergeant in the Women's Air Corps, no less. He raised four children, the oldest of whom, Susan, is celebrating her 71st birthday today. And on a June morning many years ago, another one of Irving's daughters, Carole, called to check in. Her mother answered but was in a rush. "We can't talk," she said, "your father is being honored and we're late." Carole asked, "Honored for what?" And the answer came: for his heroism in the skies above Normandy exactly 50 years earlier.

You see, Irving's children never knew that their father flew over those French beachheads on D-Day. He never mentioned it. Now when they call to check in, his children always say, "Thank you for saving the world." [*Laughter*] And Irving, sharp as ever at a hundred years young, always replies, "Well, I had a little help." [*Laughter*]

Whenever the world makes you cynical, whenever you doubt that courage and goodness and selflessness is possible, then stop and look to a veteran. They don't always go around telling stories of their heroism, so it's up to us to ask and to listen, to tell those stories for them, and to live in our own lives the values for which they were prepared to give theirs.

It's up to us to make sure they always get the care that they need. As Bob mentioned, when I announced my candidacy for this office almost a decade ago, I recommitted this generation to that work. And we've increased funding for veterans by more than 85 percent. We've cut veteran homelessness almost in half. Today, more veterans have access to health care and fewer are unemployed. We helped disabled veterans afford prosthetics. We're delivering more mental health care services to more veterans than ever before, because we know that not all wounds of war are visible.

Together, we began this work. Together, we must continue to keep that sacred trust with our veterans and honor their good work with our own, knowing that our mission is never done. It is still a tragedy that 20 veterans a day take their own lives. We have to get them the help they need. We have to keep solving problems like long wait times at the VA. We have to keep cutting the disability claims backlog. We have to resist any effort to outsource and privatize the health care we owe America's veterans.

On Veterans Day, we acknowledge, humbly, that we can never serve our veterans in quite the same way that they served us. But we can try. We can practice kindness. We can pay it forward. We can volunteer. We can serve. We can respect one another. We can always get each other's backs.

That is what Veterans Day asks all of us to think about. The person you pass as you walk down the street might not be wearing our Nation's uniform today. But consider for a moment that a year or a decade or a generation ago, he or she might have been one of our fellow citizens who was willing to lay down their life for strangers like us. And we can show how much we love our country by loving our neighbors as ourselves.

May God bless all who served and still do. And may God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:38 a.m. in the Memorial Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery. In his remarks, he referred to Patrick K. Hallinan, Superintendent, Arlington National Cemetery; Debbera M. Ransom, founder and commander, Johnetta R. Cole AMVETS Post No. 24 in Buffalo, NY; and Evanston, IL, resident Irving Lerner, and his children Susan Ricker and Rita, David, and Carole D. Lerner.

The President's Weekly Address
November 12, 2016

Hi, everybody. This weekend, as we search for ways to bridge our differences, we look to the principles that are more enduring than politics. And some of the best examples are found in the men and women we saluted yesterday and every day: our troops and our veterans.

It is the example of young Americans—our 9/11 generation—who, as first responders ran into smoldering towers, ran to a recruiting center and signed up to serve. It's the example of a military that meets every mission, one united team, all looking out for one another, all getting each other's backs. It is the example of the single most diverse institution in our country: soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and coastguardsmen who represent every corner of our country, every shade of humanity, immigrant and native-born, Christian, Muslim, Jew, and nonbeliever alike, all forged into common service.

It is the example of veterans—patriots—who, when they take off their fatigues, put back on the camouflage of everyday life in America, becoming small-businesspeople and teachers and coaches, our first responders and city council members and neighborhood role models, all still serving this country we love with the same sense of duty and valor.

Our veterans don't always go around telling stories of their heroism. So it is up to us to ask, to listen, to tell those stories for them, and to live in our own lives the values for which they were prepared to give theirs. It's up to us to summon some of the courage and humility of our veterans and to acknowledge that we can never serve them in quite the same way that they serve us.

But we can try. We need to keep working to make sure they always get the care and benefits they've earned. We can practice kindness. We can volunteer, serve, and respect one another. We can always get each other's backs. And we can show how much we love our country by loving our neighbors as ourselves.

To all of you who served and who still do: thank you. And have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:20 p.m. on November 11 in the Blue Room at the White House for broadcast on November 12. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 11, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on November 12. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

The President's News Conference
November 14, 2016

The President. Hello, everybody. In a couple hours, I'll be departing on my final foreign trip as President. And while we're abroad, I'll have a chance to take a few of your questions, but I figured why wait? I know that there's a lot of domestic issues that people are thinking about, so I wanted to see if I could clear out some of the underbrush so that when we're overseas and people are asking about foreign policy questions, people don't feel obliged to tack on three other questions to them.

Q. We still will.

The President. Let me—I know you still will, yes. [*Laughter*] That I'm aware of, but I'm trying something out here. First of all, let me mention three brief topics.

First of all, as I discussed with the President-elect on Thursday, my team stands ready to accelerate in the next steps that are required to ensure a smooth transition. And we are going to be staying in touch as we travel. I remember what it was like when I came in 8 years ago. It is a big challenge. This office is bigger than any one person. And that's why ensuring a smooth transition is so important.

It's not something that the Constitution explicitly requires, but it is one of those norms that are vital to a functioning democracy, similar to norms of civility and tolerance and a commitment to reason and to facts and analysis. It's part of what makes this country work. And as long as I'm President, we are going to uphold those norms and cherish and uphold those ideals.

As I've told my staff, we should be very proud that their work has already ensured that when we turn over the keys, the car is in pretty good shape. We are indisputably in a stronger position today than we were when I came in 8 years ago. Jobs have been growing for 73 straight months. Incomes are rising. Poverty is falling. The uninsured rate is at the lowest level on record. Carbon emissions have come down without impinging on our growth.

And so my instructions to my team are that we run through the tape. We make sure that we finish what we started, that we don't let up in these last couple of months, because my goal is, on January 21, America is in the strongest position possible and, hopefully, there's an opportunity for the next President to build on that.

Number two, our work has also helped to stabilize the global economy. And because there is one President at a time, I'll spend this week reinforcing America's support for the approaches that we've taken to promote economic growth and global security on a range of issues.

I look forward to my first visit in Greece. And then, in Germany, I'll visit with Chancellor Merkel, who's probably been my closest international partner these past 8 years. I'll also signal our solidarity with our closest allies and express our support for a strong, integrated, and united Europe. It's essential to our national security, and it's essential to global stability. And that's why the transatlantic alliance and the NATO alliance have endured for decades under Democratic and Republican administrations.

Finally, in Peru, I'll meet with the leaders of countries that have been the focus of our foreign policy through our rebalance in the Asia-Pacific. This is a time of great change in the world. But America has always been a pillar of strength and a beacon of hope to peoples around the globe. And that's what it must continue to be.

Finally, on a personal note, Michelle and I want to offer our deepest condolences to Gwen Ifill's family and to all of you, her colleagues, on her passing. Gwen was a friend of ours. She was an extraordinary journalist. She always kept faith with the fundamental responsibilities of her profession: asking tough questions, holding people in power accountable, and defending a strong and free press that makes our democracy work.

I always appreciated Gwen's reporting, even when I was at the receiving end of one of her tough and thorough interviews. Whether she

reported from a convention floor or from the field, whether she sat at the debate moderator's table or at the anchor's desk, she not only informed today's citizens, but she also inspired tomorrow's journalists. She was an especially powerful role model for young women and girls who admired her integrity, her tenacity, and her intellect, and for whom she blazed a trail as one-half of the first all-female anchor team on network news.

So Gwen did her country a great service. Michelle and I join her family and her colleagues and everybody else who loved her in remembering her fondly today.

So, with that, I'm going to take some questions. And because Josh Earnest has some pull around here, he just happened to put at the top of the list Colleen Nelson of the Wall Street Journal.

My understanding is, Colleen, that this is wrapping up your stint here and you're going to Kansas City.

Q. Yes.

The President. Josh just happens to be from Kansas City. [*Laughter*] So I didn't know if there was any coincidence there. But we wish you the very best of luck in your new endeavors.

Q. As it turns out, there's no place like Kansas.

The President. There you go.

U.S. Foreign Policy/President-Elect Donald J. Trump/North Atlantic Treaty Organization/2016 Presidential Election/Democratic Party

Q. You're about to embark on your final foreign trip. What will you say to other world leaders about your successor? They've expressed many of the same misgivings that you have about Donald Trump. Should they be worried about the future of U.S. foreign policy? And separately, as Democrats scramble to regroup after a pretty shocking upset, what is your advice about where the party goes now? And who should lead your party?

The President. Good. One of the great things about the United States is that when it comes to world affairs, the President obviously is the leader of the executive branch, the Commander in Chief, the spokesperson for the Nation, but the influence and the work that we have is the result not just of the President. It is the result of countless interactions and arrangements and relationships between our military and other militaries and our diplomats and other diplomats and intelligence officers and development workers. And there is enormous continuity beneath the day-to-day news that makes us that indispensable nation when it comes to maintaining order and promoting prosperity around the world. That will continue.

In my conversation with the President-elect, he expressed a great interest in maintaining our core strategic relationships. And so one of the messages I will be able to deliver is his commitment to NATO and the transatlantic alliance. I think that's one of the most important functions I can serve at this stage, during this trip, is to let them know that there is no weakening of resolve when it comes to America's commitment to maintaining a strong and robust NATO relationship and a recognition that those alliances aren't just good for Europe, they're good for the United States, and they're vital for the world.

With respect to the Democratic Party, look, as I said in the Rose Garden right after the election, when your team loses, everybody gets deflated, and it's hard, and it's challenging. And so I think it's a healthy thing for the Democratic Party to go through some reflection. I think it's important for me not to be big-footing that conversation. I think we want to see new voices and new ideas emerge. That's part of the reason why I think term limits are a really useful thing.

I think the Democrats should not waver on our core beliefs and principles: the belief that we should have an economy that works for everybody, not just a few; the belief that America, at its best, is inclusive and not exclusive, that we insist on the dignity and God-given potential and worth of every child, regardless of race or gender or sexual orientation or what ZIP Code they were born in. That we are committed to a world in which we keep America safe, but we recognize that our power doesn't just flow from our extraordinary military, it also

flows from the strength of our ideals and our principles and our values.

So there are going to be a core set of values that shouldn't be up for debate, should be our north star. But how we organize politically I think is something that we should spend some time thinking about. I believe that we have better ideas. But I also believe that good ideas don't matter if people don't hear them. And one of the issues that Democrats have to be clear on is that, given population distribution across the country, we have to compete everywhere. We have to show up everywhere. We have to work at a grassroots level, something that's been a running thread in my career.

I won Iowa not because the demographics dictated that I would win Iowa, it was because I spent 87 days going to every small town and fair and fish fry and VFW hall. And there were some counties where I might have lost, but maybe I lost by 20 points instead of 50 points. There are some counties maybe I won that people didn't expect because people had a chance to see you and listen to you and get a sense of who you stood for and who you were fighting for.

And the challenge for a national party is, how do you dig in there and create those kinds of structures so that people have a sense of what it is that you stand for? And that increasingly is difficult to do just through a national press strategy. It's increasingly difficult to do because of the splintering of the press.

And so I think the discussions that have been taking place about how do you build more grassroots organizing, how do you build up State parties and local parties and schoolboard elections you're paying attention to and State rep races and city council races—that all, I think, will contribute to stronger outcomes in the future.

And I'm optimistic that will happen. And I—for Democrats who are feeling completely discouraged, I've been trying to remind them everybody remembers my Boston speech in 2004; they may not remember me showing up here in 2005 when John Kerry had lost a close election, Tom Daschle, the leader of the Senate, had been beaten in an upset. Ken Salazar and I were the only two Democrats that won nationally. Republicans controlled the Senate and the House. And 2 years later, Democrats were winning back Congress, and 4 years later, I was President of the United States.

Things change pretty rapidly. But it doesn't—they don't change inevitably. They change because you work for it. Nobody said democracy is supposed to be easy. This is hard. And in a big country like this, it probably should be hard.

Mark Knoller [ABC News].

Q. Thank you, sir.

The President. Good to see you.

U.S. Presidency/President-Elect Donald J. Trump

Q. Thank you. Good to see you. Mr. President, what can you tell us about the learning curve on becoming President? Is—can you tell us how long it took you before you were fully at ease in the job, if that ever happens? And did you discuss this matter with President-elect Trump?

The President. About a week ago, I started feeling pretty good. [*Laughter*] No, look, I think the learning curve always continues. This is a remarkable job. It is like no other job on Earth. And it is a constant flow of information and challenges and issues. That is truer now than it has ever been, partly because of the nature of information and the interconnection between regions of the world.

If you were President 50 years ago, the tragedy in Syria might not even penetrate what the American people were thinking about on a day-to-day basis. Today, they're seeing vivid images of a child in the aftermath of a bombing. There was a time when if you had a financial crisis in Southeast Asia somewhere, it had no impact on our markets; today, it does.

So the amount of information, the amount of incoming that any administration has to deal with today, and respond to much more rapidly than ever before, that makes it different. I was watching a documentary, that during the Bay of Pigs crisis, JFK had about 2 weeks before anybody reported on it. Imagine that. I think it's fair to say that if something like that happens

under a current President, they've got to figure out in about an hour what their response is.

So these are the kinds of points that I shared with the President-elect. It was a free-flowing and, I think, useful conversation. I hope it was. I tried to be as honest as I could about the things I think any President coming in needs to think about. And probably the most important point that I made was that how you staff—particularly your Chief of Staff, your National Security Adviser, your White House Counsel—how you set up a process and a system to surface information, generate options for a President, understanding that, ultimately, the President is going to be the final decisionmaker, that that's something that has to be attended to right away.

I have been blessed by having—and I admittedly am biased—some of the smartest, hardest working, good people in my administration that I think any President has ever had. And as a consequence of that team, I've been able to make good decisions. And if you don't have that around you, then you'll get swamped. So I hope that he appreciated that advice.

What I also discussed was the fact that I had been encouraged by his statements on election night about the need for unity and his interest in being the President for all people, and that how he staffs, the first steps he takes, the first impressions he makes, the reset that can happen after an election—all those things are important and should be thought about. And I think it's important to give him the room and the space to do that. It takes time to put that together.

But I emphasized to him that, look, in an election like this that was so hotly contested and so divided, gestures matter. And how he reaches out to groups that may not have supported him, how he signals his interest in their issues or concerns, I think those are the kinds of things that can set a tone that will help move things forward once he's actually taken office.

Q. And how long did it take before you were at ease in the job?

The President. Well, I didn't really have time to worry about being at ease, because you'll recall, we were losing about 800,000 jobs a month.

So the good news is that in some ways, my experience is atypical. It's hard to find an analogous situation. By the time FDR came into office, the Depression had been going on for a couple of years. We were in the midst of a free fall. The financial system was locking up. The auto industry was about to go belly up. The housing market had entirely collapsed. So one of the advantages that I had was that I was too busy to worry about how acclimated I was feeling in the job. We just had to make a bunch of decisions.

In this situation, we're turning over a country that has challenges, has problems, and obviously, there are people out there who are feeling deeply disaffected. Otherwise, we wouldn't have had the results that we had in the election. On the other hand, if you look at the basic indicators of where the country is right now, the unemployment rate is as low as it's been in 8, 9 years. Incomes and wages have both gone up over the last year faster than they have in a decade or two. We've got historically low uninsured rates. The financial systems are stable. The stock market is hovering around its alltime high, and 401(k)s have been restored. The housing market has recovered.

We have challenges internationally, but our most immediate challenge with respect to ISIL, we're seeing significant progress in Iraq, and Mosul is now increasingly being retaken by Iraqi security forces supported by us. Our alliances are in strong shape. Our—the progress we've made with respect to carbon emissions has been greater than any country on Earth. And gas is 2 bucks a gallon.

So he will have time and space, I think, to make judicious decisions. The incoming administration doesn't have to put out a huge number of fires. They may want to take the country in a significantly different direction, but they've got time to consider what exactly they want to achieve. And that's a testament to the tremendous work that my team has done over the last 8 years. I'm very proud of them for it.

Athena Jones [CNN].

President-Elect Donald J. Trump/2016 Presidential Election

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You said more than once that you did not believe that Donald Trump would ever be elected President, and that you thought he was unfit for the office. Now that you've spent time with him, sitting down and talking to him for an hour and a half in the Oval Office, do you now think that President-elect Trump is qualified to be President?

And if I can do a compound question, the other one is, you mentioned staffing and tone. What do you say to those Americans who may not doubt that there will be a peaceful transition, but that are concerned about some of the policies and sentiments, either expressed by President-elect Trump himself or his supporters, that may seem hostile to minorities and others? Specifically, I'm talking about the announcement that Steve Bannon, who is a proponent of the so-called alt-right movement, what many call the White nationalist movement, is going to have a prominent role in the White House under a President Trump as his chief strategist and senior adviser. What message does that send to the country, to the world?

The President. Okay. Athena, without copping out, I think it's fair to say that it would not be appropriate for me to comment on every appointment that the President-elect starts making if I want to be consistent with the notion that we're going to try to facilitate a smooth transition.

Look, the people have spoken. Donald Trump will be the next President, the 45th President of the United States. And it will be up to him to set up a team that he thinks will serve him well and reflect his policies. And those who didn't vote for him have to recognize that that's how democracy works. That's how this system operates.

When I won, there were a number of people who didn't like me and didn't like what I stood for. And I think that whenever you've got an incoming President of the other side, particularly in a bitter election like this, it takes a while for people to reconcile themselves with that new reality. Hopefully, it's a reminder that elections matter and voting counts. And so I don't know how many times we have to relearn this lesson, because we ended up having 43 percent of the country not voting who were eligible to vote. But it makes a difference.

So, given that President-elect Trump is now trying to balance what he said in the campaign and the commitments he made to his supporters with working with those who disagreed with him and Members of Congress and reaching out to constituencies that didn't vote for him, I think it's important for us to let him make his decisions. And I think the American people will judge over the course of the next couple of years whether they like what they see and whether these are the kinds of policies and this is the direction that they want to see the country go in.

And my role is to make sure that when I hand off this White House that it is in the best possible shape and that I've been as helpful as I can to him in going forward and building on the progress that we've made.

And my advice, as I said, to the President-elect when we had our discussions was that campaigning is different from governing. I think he recognizes that. I think he's sincere in wanting to be a successful President and moving this country forward. And I don't think any President ever comes in saying to himself, I want to figure out how to make people angry or alienate half the country. I think he's going to try as best he can to make sure that he delivers, not only for the people who voted for him, but for the people at large. And the good thing is, is that there are going to be elections coming up, so there's a built-in incentive for him to try to do that.

But it's only been 6 days. And I think it will be important for him to have the room to staff up, to figure out what his priorities are, to be able to distinguish between what he was campaigning on and what is practical, what he can actually achieve. There are certain things that make for good sound bites, but don't always translate into good policy. And that's something that he and his team, I think, will wrestle

with, in the same way that every President wrestles with.

I did say to him, as I've said publicly, that because of the nature of the campaigns and the bitterness and ferocity of the campaigns, that it's really important to try to send some signals of unity and to reach out to minority groups or women or others that were concerned about the tenor of the campaign. And I think that's something that he will want to do. But this is all happening real fast. He's got commitments to supporters that helped to get him here, and he's going to have to balance those. And over the coming weeks and months and years, my hope is, is that those impulses ultimately win out. But it's a little too early to start making judgments on that.

Q. And your views about qualifications, has that changed after meeting with him?

The President. I think that he successfully mobilized a big chunk of the country to vote for him, and he's going to win—he has won. He's going to be the next President. And regardless of what experience or assumptions he brought to the office, this office has a way of waking you up. And those aspects of his positions or predispositions that don't match up with reality he will find shaken up pretty quick, because reality has a way of asserting itself.

And some of his gifts that obviously allowed him to execute one of the biggest political upsets in history, those are ones that, hopefully, he will put to good use on behalf of all the American people.

Scott Horsley [NPR].

U.S. Economy/Trade/2016 Presidential Election

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You're off to Europe, which is facing some of the same populist pressures we see at work in this country. When you spoke at the U.N., you talked about the choice we're facing between integration and building walls.

The President. Right.

Q. What choice do you think the American people made last week? And is there still a chance for what you called a course correction before Europeans make some of their choices?

The President. I think the American people recognize that the world has shrunk, that it's interconnected, that you're not going to put that genie back in the bottle. The American people recognize that their careers or their kids' careers are going to have to be more dynamic, that they might not be working at a single plant for 30 years, but they might have to change careers. They might have to get more education. They might have to retool or retrain.

And I think the American people are game for that. They want to make sure that the rules of the game are fair. And what that means is that if you look at surveys around Americans' attitudes on trade, the majority of the American people still support trade. But they're concerned about whether or not trade is fair and whether we've got the same access to other countries' markets as they have with us. Is there just a race to the bottom when it comes to wages and so forth?

Now, I made an argument—thus far, unsuccessfully—that the trade deal we had organized, TPP, did exactly that: that it strengthened workers' rights and environmental rights, leveled the playing field, and as a consequence, would be good for American workers and American businesses. But that's a complex argument to make when people remember plants closing and jobs being offshored.

So part of what I think this election reflected was people wanting that course correction that you described. And the message around stopping surges of immigration, not creating new trade deals that may be unfair, I think those were themes that played a prominent role in the campaign.

As we now shift to governing, my argument is that we do need to make sure that we have an orderly, lawful immigration process, but that if it is orderly and lawful, immigration is good for our economy. It keeps this country young. It keeps it dynamic. We have entrepreneurs and strivers who come here and are willing to take risks. And that's part of the reason why America, historically, has been successful. It's part of the reason why our economy is stronger and better positioned than most of

our other competitors, is because we've got a younger population that's more dynamic.

When it comes to trade, I think when you're governing, it will become increasingly apparent that if you were to just eliminate trade deals with Mexico, for example, well, you've got a global supply chain. The parts that are allowing auto plants that were about to shut down to now employ double shifts is because they're bringing in some of those parts to assemble out of Mexico. And so it's not as simple as it might have seemed.

And the key for us—when I say "us," I mean Americans, but I think particularly for progressives—is to say your concerns are real, your anxieties are real, here's how we fix them: higher minimum wage; stronger worker protections so workers have more leverage to get a bigger piece of the pie; stronger financial regulations, not weaker ones; yes to trade, but trade that ensures that these other countries that trade with us aren't engaging in child labor, for example; being attentive to inequality and not tone deaf to it, but offering prescriptions that are actually going to help folks in communities that feel forgotten.

That's going to be our most important strategy. And I think we can successfully do that. People will still be looking to the United States. Our example will still carry great weight. And it continues to be my strong belief that the way we are going to make sure that everybody feels a part of this global economy is not by shutting ourselves off from each other even if we could, but rather by working together more effectively than we have in the past.

Martha Raddatz [ABC News].

President-Elect Donald J. Trump/Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

Q. Thanks, Mr. President. Given some of the harsh words you had about Mr. Trump, calling him "temperamentally unfit to be Commander in Chief," did anything surprise you about President-elect Trump when you met with him in your office? And also I want to know, does anything concern you about a Trump Presidency?

The President. Well, we had a very cordial conversation. And that didn't surprise me to some degree, because I think that he is obviously a gregarious person. He's somebody who, I think, likes to mix it up and to have a vigorous debate.

And what's clear is that he was able to tap into, yes, the anxieties, but also the enthusiasm of his voters in a way that was impressive. And I said so to him, because I think that to the extent that there were a lot of folks who missed the Trump phenomenon, I think that connection that he was able to make with his supporters that was impervious to events that might have sunk another candidate, that's powerful stuff.

I also think that he is coming to this office with fewer set, hard-and-fast policy prescriptions than a lot of other Presidents might be arriving with. I don't think he is ideological. I think ultimately, he's pragmatic in that way. And that can serve him well, as long as he's got good people around him and he has a clear sense of direction.

Do I have concerns? Absolutely. Of course, I've got concerns. He and I differ on a whole bunch of issues. But the Federal Government and our democracy is not a speedboat, it's an ocean liner, as I discovered when I came into office. It took a lot of really hard work for us to make significant policy changes, even in our first 2 years, when we had larger majorities than Mr. Trump will enjoy when he comes into office.

And one of the things I advised him to do was to make sure that before he commits to certain courses of action, he's really dug in and thought through how various issues play themselves out. I'll use a obvious example where we have a difference, but it will be interesting to see what happens in the coming year, and that's the Affordable Care Act.

So, obviously, this has been the holy grail for Republicans over the last 6, 7 years—was, "We've got to kill Obamacare." Now, that has been taken as an article of faith, that this is terrible, it doesn't work, and we have to undo it.

But now that Republicans are in charge, they've got to take a look and say, let's see,

we've got 20 million people who have health insurance who didn't have it before; health care costs generally have gone up at a significantly slower rate since Obamacare was passed than they did before, which has saved the Federal Treasury hundreds of billions of dollars; people who have health insurance are benefiting in all sorts of ways that they may not be aware of, everything from no longer having lifetime limits on the claims that they can make, to seniors getting prescription drug discounts under Medicare, to free mammograms.

Now, it's one thing to characterize these—this thing as not working when it's just an abstraction. Now, suddenly, you're in charge, and you're going to repeal it. Okay, well, what happens to those 20 million people who have health insurance? Are you going to just kick them off, and suddenly, they don't have health insurance? And in what ways are their lives better because of that? Are you going to repeal the provision that ensures that if you do have health insurance on your job and you lose your job or you change jobs or you start a small business, that you're not discriminated against because you've got a preexisting condition? That's really popular. How are you going to replace it? Are you going to change the policy that kids can stay on their parent's health insurance plan until they're 26? How are you going to approach all these issues?

Now, my view is that if they can come up with something better that actually works, and a year or two after they've replaced the Affordable Care Act with their own plan, that 25 million people have health insurance, and it's cheaper and better and running smoothly, I'll be the first ones to say, that's great, congratulations.

If, on the other hand, whatever they're proposing results in millions of people losing coverage and results in people who already have health insurance losing protections that were contained in the legislation, then we're going to have a problem. And I think that's not going to be unique to me; I think the American people will respond that way.

So I think on a lot of issues, what you're going to see is, now comes the hard part. Now is governance. We are going to be able to present to the incoming administration a country that is stronger; a Federal Government that is working better and more efficiently; a national security apparatus that is both more effective and truer to our values; energy policies that are resulting in not just less pollution, but also more jobs.

And I think the President-elect, rightly, would expect that he's judged on whether we improve from that baseline and on those metrics, or things get worse. And if things get worse, then the American people will figure that out pretty quick. And if things get better, then more power to him. And I'll be the first to congratulate him.

U.S. Presidency/President-Elect Donald J. Trump

Q. But you, sir—Mr. President, you had talked specifically about his temperament. Do you still have any concern about his temperament?

The President. As I said—because, Athena asked the question—whatever you bring to this office, this office has a habit of magnifying and pointing out, and hopefully, then you correct for it.

This may seem like a silly example, but I know myself well enough to know I can't keep track of paper. I am not well organized in that way. And so, pretty quickly, after I'm getting stacks of briefing books coming in every night, I say to myself, I've got to figure out a system, because I have bad filing, sorting, and organizing habits. And I've got to find some people who can help me keep track of this stuff. Now, that seems trivial, but actually, it ends up being a pretty big piece of business.

I think what will happen with the President-elect is, there are going to be certain elements of his temperament that will not serve him well unless he recognizes them and corrects them. Because when you're a candidate and you say something that is inaccurate or controversial, it has less impact than it does when you're President of the United States. Everybody around the world is paying attention. Markets move. National security issues require a level of precision in order to make sure that you don't

make mistakes. And I think he's—he recognizes that this is different, and so do the American people.

All right, I'm going to take just a couple more questions, and then I get out of here.

Nadia Bilbassy [Nadia Bilbassy-Charters, Al Arabiya].

Iran/Paris Agreement on Climate Change/Environment

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. President-elect Trump threatened to unravel the Iran nuclear deal, which your administration worked very hard to achieve. What was your concern if he alters part of it? And what would your advice be, considering that he said he's open to your advice?

And on Syria, sir, the Syrian regime now is threatening Aleppo with a massive onslaught. You talked passionately a few years back about Benghazi, and you warned against the killing of civilians there. Many people criticized your administration for the shortcoming on the Syria policy. Are you willing to let Aleppo fall under your watch? And how do you react to President Trump—I mean, President-elect Trump's statement that he won't support the Syrian opposition anymore? Thank you.

The President. Iran is a good example of the gap, I think, between some of the rhetoric in this town—not unique to the President-elect—and the reality. I think there was a really robust debate about the merits of the Iran deal before it was completed. And I actually was pretty proud of how our democracy processed that. It was a serious debate. I think people of good will were on both sides of the issue. Ultimately, we were able to persuade Members of Congress and the public—at least enough of them—to support it.

At the time, the main argument against it was, Iran wouldn't abide by the deal, that they would cheat. We now have over a year of evidence that they have abided by the agreement. That's not just my opinion; it's not just people in my administration. That's the opinion of Israeli military and intelligence officers who are part of a Government that vehemently opposed the deal.

So my suspicion is, is that when the President-elect comes in, and he's consulting with his Republican colleagues on the Hill, that they will look at the facts. Because to unravel a deal that's working and preventing Iran from pursuing a nuclear weapon would be hard to explain, particularly if the alternative were to have them freed from any obligations and go ahead and pursue a weapon.

And keep in mind, this is not just an international agreement between us and the Iranians; this is between the P5-plus-1, other countries, some of our closest allies. And for us to pull out would then require us to start sanctioning those other countries in Europe or China or Russia that were still abiding by the deal because, from their perspective, Iran had done what it was supposed to do.

So it becomes more difficult, I think, to undo something that's working than undo something that isn't working. And when you're not responsible for it, I think you can call it a terrible deal. When you are responsible for the deal and preventing Iran from getting a nuclear weapon, you're more likely to look at the facts.

That is going to be true in other circumstances. For example, the Paris Agreement. Obviously, there's been a lot of talk about the possibility of undoing this international agreement. Now, you've got 200 countries that have signed up for this thing. And the good news is that what we've been able to show over the last 5, 6, 8 years is that it's possible to grow the economy really fast and possible to bring down carbon emissions as well.

It's not just a bunch of rules that we've set up. You've got utilities that are putting in solar panels and creating jobs. You've got the Big Three automakers who have seen record sales and are overachieving on the fuel efficiency standards that we set. Turns out that people like not having to fill up as often and save money at the pump, even if it's good for the environment.

You've got States like California that have been moving forward on a clean energy agenda separate and apart from any Federal regulations that have been put forward. In fact, 40 percent of the country already lives under—in

States that are actively pursuing what's embodied in the Paris Agreement and the Clean Power Plant rule. And even States like Texas that politically tend to oppose me, you've seen huge increases in wind power and solar power. And you've got some of the country's biggest companies, like Google and Walmart, all pursuing energy efficiency because it's good for their bottom line.

So what we've been able to do is to embed a lot of these practices into how our economy works. And it's made our economy more efficient, it's helped the bottom line of folks, and it's cleaned up the environment.

What the Paris Agreement now does is say to China and India and other countries that are potentially polluting, come onboard; let's work together so you guys do the same thing.

And the biggest threat when it comes to climate change and pollution isn't going to come from us, because we only have 300 million people. It's going to come from China, with over a billion people, and India, with over a billion people. And if they are pursuing the same kinds of strategies that we did before we became more aware of the environment, then our kids will be choked off.

And so, again, do I think that this new administration will make some changes? Absolutely. But these international agreements, the tradition has been that you carry them forward across administrations, particularly if, once you actually examine them, it turns out that they're doing good for us and binding other countries into behavior that will help us. All right?

Last question. Justin Sink [Bloomberg].

Libya/Syria

Ms. Bilbassy-Charters. Sir, sir, on Syria.

The President. I'm sorry—oh, I'm sorry. Okay, you're right. You are right about that.

With respect to Syria, in Benghazi, we had an international mandate. We had a U.N. security resolution. We had a broad-based coalition, and we were able to carry out a support mission that achieved the initial goal of preventing Benghazi from being slaughtered fairly quickly. It's no secret—you know this region well—that Syria is a much more messy situation, with proxies coming from every direction.

And so I wish that I could bring this to a halt immediately. We have made every effort to try to bring about a political resolution to this challenge. John Kerry has spent an infinite amount of time trying to negotiate with Russians and Iranians and Gulf States and other parties to try to end the killing there. But if what you're asking is, do we have the capacity to carry out the same kinds of military actions in Syria that we did in Libya, the situation is obviously different. We don't have that option easily available to us.

And so we're going to have to continue to try to pursue, as best we can, a political solution and, in the interim, put as much pressure as we can to the parties to arrive at humanitarian safe spaces and cease-fires that at least alleviate the suffering that's on the ground.

I recognize that that has not worked. And it is something that I continue to think about every day, and we continue to try to find some formula that would allow us to see that suffering end. But I think it's not surprising to you, because you study this deeply, that if you have a Syrian military that is committed to killing its people indiscriminately, as necessary, and it is supported by Russia that now has substantial military assets on the ground and are actively supporting that regime, and Iran actively supporting that regime, and we are supporting what has to be our number-one national security priority, which is going after ISIL both in Mosul and ultimately in Raqqa—that the situation is not the same as it was in Libya.

And obviously, there are some who question the steps we took in Libya. I continue to believe that was the right thing to do, although, as I indicated before, in the aftermath of that campaign, I think the world community did not sufficiently support the need for some sort of security structures there, and it now is a situation that we have to get back into a better place.

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. I've given you—okay. Last question is Justin Sink of Bloomberg.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Policy/Guantanamo Bay Detention Center/Government Ethics/Department of Veterans Affairs

Q. Thanks, Mr. President. I wanted to ask about two things that might be on your desk over the next couple months as you prepare for a Trump administration. One is at least three-quarters of a million undocumented immigrants provided the Federal Government information about themselves and their families as part of your deferred action program. I'm wondering if there's anything you can do to either reassure them or shield that information from the incoming Trump administration, considering his stance on immigration.

And the second is, the administration and you have long maintained that the legal restraints upon you by Congress governing the movement of detainees from Gitmo are an unconstitutional infringement on your right as Commander in Chief. Considering that the gradual transfers that you've pursued are unlikely to continue under a Trump administration, is this now the time to sort of test that theory by moving the detainees and seeing where the chips end up lying?

The President. Those are both excellent questions. On the deferred action program that we have, known as DACA, that relates to DREAMers who are currently benefiting from these provisions, I will urge the President-elect and the incoming administration to think long and hard before they are endangering the status of what for all practical purposes are American kids.

I mean, these are kids who were brought here by their parents. They did nothing wrong. They've gone to school. They have pledged allegiance to the flag. Some of them have joined the military. They've enrolled in school. By definition, if they're part of this program, they are solid, wonderful young people of good character. And it is my strong belief that the majority of the American people would not want to see suddenly those kids have to start hiding again. And that's something that I will encourage the President-elect to look at.

With respect to Guantanamo, it is true that I have not been able to close the darn thing—[*laughter*]—because of the congressional restrictions that have been placed on us. What is also true is, we have greatly reduced the population. You now have significantly less than a hundred people there. There are some additional transfers that may be taking place over the next 2 months.

There is a group of very dangerous people that we have strong evidence of having been guilty of committing terrorist acts against the United States. But because of the nature of the evidence—in some cases, that evidence being compromised—it's very difficult to put them before a typical Article III court. And that group has always been the biggest challenge for us. My strong belief and preference is that we would be much better off closing Gitmo, moving them to a different facility that was clearly governed by U.S. jurisdiction. We'd do it a lot cheaper and just as safely.

Congress disagrees with me, and I gather that the President-elect does as well. We will continue to explore options for doing that. But keep in mind that it's not just a matter of what I'm willing to do. One of the things you discover about being President is that there are all these rules and norms and laws and you've got to pay attention to them. And the people who work for you are also subject to those rules and norms. And that's a piece of advice that I gave to the incoming President.

I am very proud of the fact that we will—knock on wood—leave this administration without significant scandal. We've made mistakes, there have been screw-ups, but I will put the ethics of this administration and our track record in terms of just abiding by the rules and norms and keeping trust with the American people—I will put this administration against any administration in history.

And the reason is because, frankly, we listened to the lawyers. And we had a strong White House Counsel's Office. We had a strong Ethics Office. We had people in every agency whose job it was to remind people, this is how you're supposed to do things. It doesn't mean everybody always did everything exactly

the way it's supposed to, because we've got 2 million people working in the Federal Government, if you're including the military, and so we had to just try to institutionalize this as much as we could. And that takes a lot of work.

And one of my suggestions to the incoming President is, is that he take that part of the job seriously as well. Again, you wouldn't know this if you were listening to some news outlets or some members of oversight committees in Congress. [*Laughter*] But if you actually look at the facts, it works.

And this is just one example of the numerous ways in which the Federal Government is much better today than it was, without people really knowing. You look at VA. People remember the legitimate problems that were publicized in Phoenix. It was scandalous what happened. What people don't remember is, is that we've brought in well over a million people who are getting benefits that weren't getting it before, driven the backlog for disability benefits way down, cut homelessness in half. Just made the agency work better—not work perfect, but work better.

And one of the mottos I always had with my staff was, better is good. Perfect is unattainable. Better is possible.

And so we will try to share the lessons that we've learned over these last 8 years with the incoming President. And my hope is, he makes things better. And if he does, we'll all benefit from it.

All right? Thank you, everybody. You guys, some of you who are traveling, you'll get a chance to ask more questions. All right?

[*At this point, several reporters began asking questions.*]

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 3:35 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Gwendolyn L. Ifill, moderator and managing editor of PBS's "Washington Week" program and coanchor and managing editor of PBS's "PBS NewsHour" program, who died on November 14; Secretary of State John F. Kerry, in his capacity as the 2004 Democratic Presidential nominee; and former Sens. Thomas A. Daschle and Kenneth L. Salazar. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. A reporter referred to Stephen K. Bannon, chief executive officer, President-elect Trump's election campaign.

Remarks During a Conference Call With Grassroots Supporters and Organizing for Action Alumni

November 14, 2016

The President. Hey, Jon Carson!

Organizing for Action Advisory Board Chair and Former Executive Director Jon Carson. There you are, President Obama.

The President. Are you stalling for me? [*Laughter*]

Mr. Carson. That's what I was doing. We're here now, so it's all yours.

The President. Has Plouffe made any sense?

Organizing for Action Adviser and Former White House Counselor David A. Plouffe. None at all, sir. That's why we've been waiting for you. [*Laughter*]

The President. All right. Well, listen, everybody, I apologize, my press conference went a little bit long. Shockingly, people have a—lots of questions for me.

I wanted to get everybody on the phone, first and foremost, just to say thank you. I mean, I could not be prouder of everything that you helped us accomplish. There are people on this phone who joined up on this amazing journey when I was running for Senate. There are people who joined us on our first forays into Iowa, back in 2007. And all of you, in all your different ways, have contributed to

what has been an amazing run over these last 8 years.

For those of you who didn't hear the press conference, basically, I just ticked off what we've accomplished in terms of saving the economy, cutting unemployment in half, lowest uninsured in history, incomes up, wages up, historic climate deal—all these things. And what I said was that the measure of what we worked so hard for is, during our period driving this bus, was the country going to end up in better place? And it indisputably has. When we turn over the keys—the country will know it because we will have the data and the metrics, the measuring sticks, to prove it—that by almost every measure, America is better off than it was.

Now, that doesn't mean that we're not all disappointed by what happened last week. I think it's fair to say that your President feels your pain on this one. It doesn't feel good. And in some ways, it feels worse because, for a lot of us, I think we didn't see it coming. Surprising losses are harder than losses you see. And I know it's also difficult in part because, when you look at public opinion around the current performance of my administration, it's higher than it's been since probably the first 3 months of the administration. And so there's that little mismatch, and that also makes it more difficult.

But I've always said, progress doesn't follow a straight line. It zigs and zags, and sometimes, it moves forward, and sometimes, it moves backwards or moves sideways. I am a firm believer that ultimately it moves in the direction of justice and more prosperity and more freedom and more inclusion. And the reason it happens is because of the people on this phone call and people like you and your idealism and your energy and your resilience over the course of American history.

So, as a consequence, I think it is fine for everybody to feel stressed, sad, discouraged for a while, but I'm giving you, like, a week and a half to get over it. And if you need the rest of this week, that's fine. But by next week, and Thanksgiving—because you're going to be talking to your family and friends, and some of them may even have voted the wrong way, you're in danger of having, like, some big argument that spoils the whole family get-together—you're going to have to be in a more positive place. And what that means is staying engaged, staying involved, and figuring out how do we move forward not only to protect what we've accomplished, but also to see this as an opportunity, because a lot of conventional wisdom has been upended.

I was asked about this during the press conference. People are going to be asking more questions about how we can organize at a grassroots level. People are going to be asking more questions about how do we communicate our issues more effectively. People are going to be looking at how do you make sure that the work that's done isn't just in Washington or in New York or L.A., but in towns and small communities all across the country.

And the network that you represent, you're perfectly poised to do that. In other words, now is the time for some organizing. An election just finished, so it's not going to be straight political organizing, but it is going to be raising awareness; it's going to be the work you're doing in nonprofits and advocacy and community-building. And over time, what's going to happen is, is that you will reinvigorate and inform our politics in ways that we can't anticipate.

So don't mope. And don't get complacent. The majority of the American people believe in a diverse, tolerant, optimistic, dynamic, inclusive vision. And as somebody who knows a thing or two about organizing, I want you to remember never to underestimate yourselves, because you guys are the best organizers I know. So don't suddenly veer off into isolation. Keep on working. Stay connected.

I know David and others are going to convene folks at other times. So stay close to each other. Generate ideas. Take some time to reflect and let's brainstorm in terms of how you're going to work together to move forward. Understand that I'm going to be constrained in what I do with all of you until I am again a private citizen. But that's not so far off. It's basically 6, 8 weeks away. And I will have some

time for vacation, but you're going to see me early next year, and we're going to be in a position where we can start cooking up all kinds of great stuff to do.

In the meantime, make sure that you stay involved locally. Find organizations that are speaking to your passions. Continue to be engaged with OFA around issues that—or just information and networking and ideas-sharing that can be done. And if you do those things, I promise you that next year Michelle and I are going to be right there with you and the clouds are going to start parting and the sun is going to come back out and we're going to be busy, involved in the amazing stuff that we've been doing all these years before.

And I've got all kinds of thoughts and ideas about it, but this isn't the best time to share them. The point is, I'm still fired up and I'm still ready to go. And I hope that all of you are, as well. And just in pure political terms, I've been reminding my staff that when I came into Washington in 2005 and was sworn in as a Senator, it was the same moment that George Bush was sworn back in as President of the United States for the second term, and Republican controlled the House and Republicans controlled the Senate. And Tom Daschle, who had been the Democratic majority leader, had lost his seat, and it looked very, very bleak. Two years later, Democrats were winning back the Congress, and 4 years later I was President.

That's pretty unlikely, but that's how stuff works when you've got amazing people all across the country who are willing to put their all into making this country better. What was true then is true now. So, like I said, you've got another few days to feel bad, and then we've got to get busy. All right?

Thank you, guys. Carson, Plouffe, I'll talk to you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:03 p.m. from the Oval Office at the White House. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks During a Conference Call With Democratic National Committee Stakeholders

November 14, 2016

Josh, thank you for the amazing introduction. And thanks, Donna, for your wonderful work. Thanks all of you for hopping on the phone.

Look, first of all, I just want to say thank you. The incredible support you've shown me over the years has allowed me to do the good that we have done. And it is indisputable that the country is better off today than it was 8 years ago. I ticked off some of the reasons for that during the press conference that I had right before I got on the line here. And it's pretty hard to argue with. And in fact, the American people—based on their assessments of our performance right now—tend to agree.

And I always tell my team that our job when we are entrusted with this amazing office at the pinnacle of our democracy is to make sure that the country is better off than it was when we started. And having done that, we have run our stage of the race. And it has been a singular honor. But more importantly, it's helped millions of people in this country and probably billions around the world—what we've done. And that was all based on the work that you guys do all across this country at the State and local and grassroots levels. Delegates, members, donors—I couldn't have done it without you. And for that I will always be grateful.

Now, I know that you put that same kind of effort into this cycle, and I want to publicly say how proud I am of Hillary Clinton on a history-making race. We did not get the results we wanted, but we took a step in shattering a barrier that's still there. And little girls and little boys are going to have a different sense of the possible thanks to her nomination and her candidacy.

That doesn't mean we don't hurt for what was an unexpected loss. And expected losses

are hard enough; unexpected ones are just worse. And that's okay. I was telling my team, you're allowed to mope for a week and a half, maybe two if you really need it. But after that, we've got to brush ourselves off and get back to work. We've got to come together and focus on a way ahead.

And it's important that we do that in a way that's consistent with who we are as Democrats. It means that we're listening to each other. We're reflecting. We're asking tough questions. We're respectful of different points of view. We're basing our decisions on facts and careful analysis, and we're taking the long view. And we're strategizing.

And in the months ahead, my hope is, is that we're convening Democrats at every level from the DNC to local ward and town committees to assess where we've fallen short and how we can build for elections, not just in Presidential years, but every year. Because I've been on this for a while. And I said this in my press conference. We have better ideas, but they have to be heard for us to actually translate those ideas into votes and ultimately into action.

And the challenge we have is that partly because of geographic distribution, there are big chunks of the country that just aren't hearing us. And they won't hear us if we're not showing up and if we're not there fighting day in, day out for those ideas.

And that is not something that you can just do every 4 years. It's something that you've got to do over a lengthy period of time: building trust, building relationships, making sure that people understand what we're about, focusing on down ballot, recruiting, training candidates, reaching out to every community, whether they agree or disagree. Because even in communities that are rock-solid Republican, there's a difference between us losing 60–40 or losing 80–20. And that can swing an election.

We've got to train new voters. We've got to train volunteers. All that work has to be done. And look, one of the challenges that I've discovered being President is, I'd like to be organizer in chief, but it's hard. You've got Syria, and you've got NATO, and you have summit meetings and economic issues that you have to deal with on ongoing basis. You try to get legislation done. That's why the DNC is so important. That's why our local State parties are so important. And although we haven't been able to do as much as I would like in order to assure that we've got the results we did in this election, I'm absolutely confident that it can be done. We've just got to be a little more strategic, and we've got to work a little bit harder.

And for the next 2 months, my main job is to make sure we finish up strong so that when I turn over the keys, I can continue to say unequivocally and demonstrably that the country is better off than when I found it. Part of that is also facilitating a decent transition so that the American people are as well served as they can be with the incoming administration.

But then I'm going to be a private citizen, and I'm not going to stop, as citizen, working on behalf of the things that I care about, and I'm hoping that I'm going to have the opportunity to work with a whole bunch of you in all kinds of different ways. And now is not the time for me to spell out how that might happen, but I'm sure that we are going to be working shoulder to shoulder for many, many years to come.

Just a couple of final thank-yous. Again, Hillary Clinton did unbelievable work. So did Bernie Sanders. My two partners here, Harry Reid and Nancy Pelosi, I could not have better partners than them in everything that we've accomplished. I want you to know, because I've been reading a lot of these reports, this notion that somehow all the work we did suddenly gets stripped away—let me tell you something, we got more done than any administration in the last who-knows-how-many decades, and if they roll back 15 or 20 percent of that, we're still 80-percent ahead. And that's not going to be as easy as I think some people feel, particularly if we continue to make the case and mobilize.

I just did my press conference, talked about the fact that suddenly everybody is going realize that 20 million people with health insurance that didn't have it before and protection against the discrimination for preexisting conditions and discounts for seniors and all this

stuff—when you poll these things individually, people like them, and they don't want them taken away. And we're going to be in a position to make the case that the work we've done is good and a lot of it needs to be preserved. And if it can be improved upon, then we should be open minded to improving it.

The bottom line is that the—and I don't know about you all, but I'm still fired up, and I'm still ready to go. Admittedly, I will take a vacation for a couple weeks after my Presidency is over, but then we're going to get back to work.

And for any of you who doubt, by the way, how quickly things can change and how fast the clouds can part, you remember that speech I gave in Boston. It was a pretty good speech, and I ended up winning the U.S. Senate race, an unknown State senator up until that point. And when I arrived in Washington in 2005, I was sworn in and everybody was really happy, and I was really proud. That was also the same time where John Kerry had lost a really close election, Tom Daschle had lost his seat and was no longer a leader in the Senate. I think Ken Salazar and I were the only two Democrats across the country that had won. Republicans controlled the Senate and the House and the Presidency. Things were looking pretty bleak. Two years later, Democrats were taking over Congress, and 4 years later, I was President of the United States.

So I've seen it. And the reason that happens is because of all of you. And that's why I'm proud of you and that's why I'm proud to be a Democrat. Let's learn our lessons, lick our wounds, brush ourselves off, and then, we'll get back to work. All right?

Thank you, guys.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:22 p.m. from the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Pennsylvania State Attorney General–elect Josh Shapiro; Donna L. Brazile, interim chair, Democratic National Committee; 2016 Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton; Sen. Bernard Sanders, in his former capacity as a Democratic Presidential candidate; Senate Minority Leader Harry M. Reid; House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi; Secretary of State John F. Kerry, in his capacity as the 2004 Democratic Presidential nominee; and former Sen. Kenneth L. Salazar. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Prokopios Pavlopoulos of Greece in Athens, Greece

November 15, 2016

President Pavlopoulos. Mr. President, I welcome you to Athens, as the President of that great, friendly country, the United States of America, who has won global distinction for defending lands, democracy, and justice. These are the characteristics which define your international acclaim and appeal.

Your acclaim and appeal are, of course, justified by, among others, your initiatives of dealing with a deep global economic crisis; the support of the social rule of law; management of the acute and, in your own words, epic refugee crisis with humanity and justice; and cracking down on the barbarity of terrorism, dealing in an appropriate manner with countless criminals who commit crimes against humanity.

Mr. President, our peoples are bound by truly historic ties of friendship and cooperation, which have become even stronger thanks to the great Greek American community of which we Greeks are very proud, and for which we always have feelings of great gratitude. With this opportunity, I would like to thank you warmly for your solidarity to Greece and to the Greek people throughout this deep and painful economic and social crisis that our country suffered. I am certain that your successor, the new President of the United States, Mr. Trump, will continue on the same path.

Mr. President, in these difficult times for mankind, mankind stands to benefit a great deal from the close and sincere cooperation between the United States and the European Union. We are convinced that the U.S. has every reason to look forward to a strong and prosperous Europe. Greece is committed to this direction. Despite the hardship and the huge sacrifices of the people—which, it should be noted, are not only the result of our own errors—we remain firm on the course of the European Union and of the euro zone. We strive to make all our partners understand that it is our duty to stay on the path of European integration, far from phobic syndromes and lack of solidarity, which can only undermine our common European future. We are deeply inspired by the European ideal, and we defend our national interests not only on the basis of international law as a whole, but also on the basis of European primary law and secondary legislation.

We deal with our national issues within this primary and secondary legislation. And therefore I'd like to point out three examples of what we call our national issues. The Cyprus issue, which is, of course, first and foremost, an international and European issue can only bear a result through full respect of the European institutional hierarchy, and we are in favor of a speedy resolution based on a fair and viable solution.

The institutional hierarchy obviously excludes a confederate solution or occupation armies and obsolete guarantees, which deprive the modern concept of sovereignty of its meaning. We should also not forget that the solution of the Cyprus issue that does not respect those facts would create a very negative precedent for the existence and the sovereignty of every member state. This is primary European law, and this precedent could put at risk all of the individual member states.

We also deem that any dispute of the Treaty of Lausanne is inconceivable and unacceptable since it would be a blatant violation of international law, for which the treaty was part, and would undermine not only the borders of Greece, but also of the European Union, since the borders of the European Union, Mr. President, are the borders of individual member states.

Finally, the fact that the neighboring state is claiming a name, which, besides falsifying history, obviously constitutes irredentist behavior and therefore indirectly questions existing borders; this goes against international and European law and undermines its own European perspective.

Mr. President, I would once again like to welcome you. And I reserve the words that befit your personality and your work for tonight's dinner. I wish you a pleasant stay in Athens. And let me assure you that we Greeks always, even after the end of your term, think of you as a statesman of world class and a great friend of Greece and of the Greek people.

President Obama. Well, Mr. President, I just want to thank you for the warm welcome and thank the Greek people for hosting us here today. I send greetings from all Americans, but as you noted, we have an extraordinary Greek American community that is very excited about this visit.

This, as you noted, will be my last foreign trip. And I thought it was very appropriate for us to visit a great country that is the birthplace of democracy, the source of so many of the ideals and values that helped to build America, and an outstanding friend and ally.

Obviously, Greece has gone through very challenging economic times over the last several years. And it has been the policy of my administration to do everything we can to work with the Greek Government and the Greek people to restore growth and optimism and to alleviate hardship. And we are glad to see that progress is being made, although we recognize that there are significant challenges ahead, and we intend to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Greek people throughout this process.

We believe that a strong, prosperous, and unified Europe is not only good for the people of Europe, but good for the world and good for the United States. And we also believe that it's important that all people have opportunity and inclusion in growth inside of Europe. And part of my message as I travel not just to Greece

but to meet with other European leaders is to encourage a process that ensures opportunity for all, particularly for the youth of Europe and youth here in Greece.

I also want to extend the world's appreciation for the humanitarian and compassionate manner that Greece has dealt with the severe migration and refugee crisis that's been taking place.

As I said at the U.N. Summit on Refugees that I hosted in September, it's important that we don't have any single country bear the entire burden of these challenges; that all of us are contributing and participating in alleviating suffering, and dealing with migration in an orderly and compassionate way. And we have been very glad to partner with the Greek Government in managing the situation appropriately.

And finally, whether it's dealing with terrorism, addressing some of the challenges that are occurring in the Middle East, hosting our naval vessels, cooperation in the Aegean Sea, the strong NATO relationship between the United States in Greece is of the utmost importance. And I want to reaffirm not only our appreciation for the Greek people in that alliance, but underscore how important we consider the transatlantic alliance. It continues to be a cornerstone of our security that is unwavering and it is something that provides significant continuity. Even as we see a transition of Governments in the United States, across Democratic and Republican administrations, there's a recognition that the NATO alliance is absolutely vital and the transatlantic relationship is the cornerstone of our mutual security as well as prosperity.

So, in addition to the formal meetings, I also hope to get a chance to see the Acropolis, because if you come to Greece, you've got to do a little bit of sightseeing.

So thank you, again, for your very gracious hospitality, and thanks to the Greek people for the friendship and the partnership that has made both our countries stronger.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:37 p.m. in the Accreditation Room at the Presidential Mansion. President Pavlopoulos spoke in Greek, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Alexios Tsipras of Greece in Athens
November 15, 2016

Prime Minister Tsipras. I want to thank the American President, Barack Obama, very warmly for visiting Greece and for choosing Athens, the birthplace of democracy, for his—for one of his last stops before concluding his 8-year term as the American President.

The Presidency, during which the image of the United States of America around the world has changed—even in this country, where, during the cold war era, Greek American relations were—have accumulated heavy, historic burden—a very heavy, historical burden. And I think it was a historic moment when, during the previous visit of an American President in Greece in 1999, President Clinton recognized the errors of the U.S. as regards the dictatorship in Greece. Because the American—the Greek people do not only relate to the ancient traditions; they have fought—they have shed blood until recently—to defend the values of democracy and freedom, which are our common values.

Therefore, Greece is now welcoming an American President who, throughout his term in office, has strongly defended these values; who has fought for the rights of all people, irrespective of color, religion, or sexual orientation; who has worked in order to deal with climate change; a President who has integrated millions of Americans into health care; a President who has put his strength and his influence behind a humanitarian solution of the great refugee crisis, the greatest after World War II.

And I should also like to point out—because this is very important to Greece—this is a President who, in—when he had to deal with the 2008 economic crisis, has led the American economy on a completely different path than the one that Europe has chosen. Eight years later, the result is more than visible. Quantitative easing, commitment to employment, which was the choice of the United States, have led to impressive growth rates and decline in unemployment. While on the other side, the insistence of European leaders to austerity policies keeps the European economies trapped in stagnation, and it, therefore, brings about huge political and social problems.

And it is in this respect that I had the opportunity to discuss with President Obama about the huge challenges that our country—but also the whole of Europe—is dealing with. These are challenges that needs to be dealt with collectively, decisively, and effectively. Otherwise, we will be led to—backwards from a political and a social point of view.

We have, therefore, agreed that for the modern society—for modern societies to have help—and hope and aspirations is the only reply against the increasing trend in skepticism and inward looking, which is a threat to modern democracies. The international community, when trying to avoid historic mistakes of the past, saw this issue clearly when, in 1953, and with the assistance and support of the United States of America, they settled the German debt and they linked it to a growth clause. Today, the strong Germany, which is the powerhouse of—financial powerhouse of Europe, should think in the same manner.

Greece and the Greek people have recently had to deal with the most—the harshest consequences of the global and European economic crisis. As an economy and as a society, we have had to experience a program of disastrous austerity, which made the problems more acute instead of resolving them. Within a few years, we have lost 25 percent of our GDP, while in 2004, unemployment went up to 27 percent.

Today—and despite what we have suffered—we are still standing. We were able, through great sacrifices, to avoid the threats and the threatened disaster, and we are, step by step, restoring our economy. Today, for the first time in years, we are back to growth. Slowly but surely, we are decreasing unemployment, and we are restoring confidence to the future of the Greek economy.

About 18 months ago, although we were a young government, we were asked to take very difficult decisions. And with this opportunity, I want to recognize publicly the role and the contribution of President Obama, during those difficult moments, to recognize his moral and political support he gave to my government in the effort to find a political solution.

Difficult decisions were made not only in order to keep our country in the euro zone, but also in order to maintain the cohesion of the European Union. And I believe that our decisions were right, as shown by history. We have made difficult reforms in the social security, in taxation, in public administration, but I have—we have always taken measures to fight corruption, to attract investment, to create a better context for investment in Greece.

We will continue to decisively promote reforms that will promote growth. And at the same time, we will continue to negotiate hard in order to avoid any reforms that would undermine growth. But what is more important to all of us is that society should understand, should feel the results of all that and to make the burden to the weak members of society lighter and also for the younger and productive generation, because after 7 years, people cannot take any more austerity.

The important reduction of the Greek debt, the reduction of the surpluses which are expected of us in the future, and the participation of the Bank of Greece in the quantitative easing program are rightfully—should be rightfully given to Greece. And the time to do that is now.

And from this point of view, I think that it is not only symbolic, but it is also very important that Barack Obama is now in Athens and in—the day after tomorrow will be in Berlin at this very critical point in time when decisions are expected, decisions that would not only concern Greece; they concern Europe and there-

fore the global economy. Cooperation and solidarity are necessary requirements in order to bring about the solutions that will once again bring stability to the European integration and bring it back to the track of growth.

And in relation to that, President Obama and I discussed a number of important issues, such as the continuation of our bilateral economic and business cooperation: more specifically, the important potential for investments in Greece in a series of sectors, such as energy, tourism, agro-food, research, and technology. We also discussed the future where Greece, with its important shipping power, can become an important transit center for trade, transport, and energy, linking Europe to Asia and to North Africa.

We also discussed the important projects underway which upgrade the role of our country in the—on the energy map, such as the TAP, the IGB pipelines, the upgrading of the LNG terminal, and the FSRU in Alexandland—in Alexandroupoli, which is now being designed. Also, we discussed the possibility of opening new natural gas corridors in the Eastern Mediterranean, which will play an important role to peace and stability in our region.

We have also discussed the excellent Greek human potential—human capital—and especially young scientists. We have stressed the huge potential opening from—for the cooperation between the American and the Greek business communities in the fields of innovation and startup companies in Greece. And we have also discussed the current regional developments, the great challenges in security, migration, the need to strengthen our cooperation on these issues.

We have discussed the critical role that Greece plays as a pillar of peace and security in a region where stabilization is on the grow. Me—it's a country of Europe, of the Eastern Mediterranean, of the Balkans, of the wider Black Sea neighborhood, which promotes—steadily promotes—bilateral and, alongside Cyprus, the tripartite cooperation with all the countries of the region on the basis of international law; a country which is using its role as an active member of the EU and NATO to promote peace, stability and security in the region, and which is gradually strengthening its role in order to promote border security and cooperation against terrorism.

A country which, despite its financial difficulties, has offered support to hundreds of thousands of refugees who arrived on its shores. A country when—which, when the Balkan corridor was unilaterally closed, and despite the pressure exercised on it to violate our common values, still insists that the only way to deal with the refugee issue is respect for international law, cooperation with transit countries and countries of origin, and dealing with the origins of migration—with the reasons of migration. And in this framework, we have discussed the importance of implementing the EU-Turkey agreement and continuation of NATO operations in the Aegean.

We have stressed the needs to do whatever possible to promote peace and stability in Syria, Iraq, and Libya. The hardship, the fighting against civilians should stop, and terrorism should be fought decisively.

We have also stressed the need to restart the credible talks on the Middle East issue. And in this framework, I have underscored my commitment to dialogue and cooperation with our neighboring Turkey, a country that plays important role for the future of our region. But I still stressed that the promotion of these important relations can only take place on the basis of mutual respect, without threats of war and questioning of sovereign rights.

And of course, we have discussed the Cyprus issue: the need to find a fair and viable solution on the basis of U.N. resolutions and the—compatible with the fact that Cyprus is an EU member state. We have therefore expressed our support to the very important, critical bicommunal talks which are underway. Tomorrow I will be meeting President Anastasiadis, who will be in Athens.

We need to be very careful at this very critical point in relation to these talks, because important issues are still pending. Our objective is to achieve a solution that will benefit all of the Cypriots and a solution that will promote the confidence building on the island. And

this, in our view, cannot happen without the departure of the occupation army and without doing away with the obsolete system of guarantees.

So, before I conclude, I should like to once more thank President Obama for opting to visit our country. I would like now to remember the words of another important American President, who, during the previous century, had to fight in order to deal with challenges similar to the current ones: security, economic crisis, or migration of movements of populations. And he had said that real freedom for people can only exist whenever there is security and independence. And he had only said—he has also said that famine and unemployment are the raw material for dictatorships. These words are very topical nowadays. And I am certain about peoples who are committed to common values will fight in any—in every way to deter any possibility of us going back into history.

It is our duty to make a leap into the future, and I believe that we will make it. Thank you.

President Obama. Kalispera. [*Laughter*] Thank you, Prime Minister Tsipras, for your kind words and for welcoming me to Athens today. I've always wanted to come to Greece, and I'm delighted to be able to make this part of my last trip overseas as President of the United States.

I think we all know that the world owes an enormous debt to Greece and the Greek people. So many of our ideas of democracy, so much of our literature and philosophy and science can be traced back to roots right here in Athens. I'm told there is a saying from those ancient times—*kalos kai agathos*—when someone or something is good and beautiful on the outside, but it's also good and noble on the inside, in terms of character and in terms of purpose. And I think that's a fine description of the friendship that exists between the Greek people and the American people.

The ideas of ancient Greece helped inspire America's Founding Fathers as they reached for democracy. Our revolutionary ideas helped inspire Greeks as they sought their own freedom, and Americans came here to help fight for Greek independence. At the dawn of the cold war, when President Truman committed the United States to the defense of Greece, he said, "I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way."

To this day, the United States is profoundly grateful for our friendship and alliance with Greece. And I'm personally very grateful to my many friends in the Greek American community, sons and daughters of Hellenes who have found success in every walk of American life. And, Alexios, I want to thank you for your commitment to our alliance and for the good work that we did today.

As the Prime Minister already noted, we spent much of our time discussing the economic situation here in Greece and how Greece can continue to move forward. I know this has been a painful and difficult time, especially for Greek workers and families, pensioners and young people. This crisis is not an abstraction, but has had a very concrete and devastating impact on the lives and livelihoods of millions of people across this country.

In our meeting, Alexios outlined next steps, including reforms to make Greece more attractive to investment and to prevent the kind of imbalances that led to the debt crisis in the first place. In other words, Greece, under his leadership, continues to do the hard work necessary to recover.

At the same time, I've been clear from the beginning of this crisis that in order to make reforms sustainable, the Greek economy needs the space to return to growth and start creating jobs again. We cannot simply look to austerity as a strategy. And it is incredibly important that the Greek people see improvements in their daily lives so that they can carry with them the hope that their lives will get better.

And in this context, as Greece continues reform, the IMF has said that debt relief is crucial. I will continue to urge creditors to take the steps needed to put Greece on a path towards a durable economic recovery, because it's in all of our interests that Greece succeeds. We all want the Greek people to prosper, to be able to provide a good life for their families and their children. That would be good for

Greece. That would be good for the European Union, good for the United States, and ultimately, good for the world.

Beyond economic issues, we discussed the pressing security challenges that we face as NATO allies. I want to take this opportunity to commend Greece for being one of the five NATO allies that spends 2 percent of GDP of defense, a goal that we have consistently set, but not everybody has met. Greece has done this even during difficult economic times. If Greece can meet this NATO commitment, all our allies should be able to do so.

We also discussed the need to continue sharing intelligence to help prevent terrorist attacks; the importance of keeping sanctions, including EU sanctions, in place until Russia has fully implemented the Minsk agreement, along with Ukraine.

As I did privately with Alexios, I want to thank the Greek people publicly for their humanitarian response to the crisis of so many migrants and refugees seeking safety in Europe. Greeks, especially on the islands, have shown extraordinary compassion, and they've rightly earned the admiration of the world. Again, Greeks have done so even as they've faced their own great economic hardships. And that's a testament, I think, to their solidarity and commitment to treating people with kindness and fairness.

Prime Minister Tsipras has made commitments to increase housing for unaccompanied children and to improve access to education for children who are migrants and refugees. And in these goals, it's an obligation of the United States to help, because this cannot be viewed just as a Greek problem, this is an international problem. And I reaffirmed my support to help in any ways that we can, including reaffirming America's support for the deal between the EU and Turkey that can manage arrivals in Europe in a way that is orderly and humane.

Finally, as Alexios mentioned, we discussed Cyprus, where the prospects for a just, comprehensive, and lasting settlement are the best that they've been for some time. It doesn't mean that success is guaranteed, but the possibility of resolving a decades-long conflict is there. And we urge the parties to continue their work. The interests of all Cypriots would be advanced with a bizonal, bicommunal federation. We're hopeful that a solution that's durable, which would create new economic opportunities for all the people across Cyprus is within reach. And it would be a powerful example to the world of what's possible with diplomacy and compromise.

So, again, Mr. Prime Minister, thank you for welcoming me. Thank you for your partnership. The Greek people have gone through some very difficult times, and there's still a hard road ahead. But despite those hardships, Greece has continued to be a reliable ally, has shown true compassion to fellow human beings in need. It's an example of the Greek character. And I'm looking forward to the opportunity to say more to the Greek people in a speech that I'll deliver tomorrow. For now, on behalf of the American people, just let me say that we are proud to count Greece as one of our closest allies and one of our greatest friends.

So, *efharisto.* [*Laughter*]

Moderator. We will now proceed to questions. There will be two questions from Greek media and two questions from American media. First question, Mr. Charitos from ERT [Panos Charitos, ERT], the state TV.

U.S. Economy/Greece's Economy

Q. I want to take you 7, 8 years back, when you entered the White House, the unemployment—the rates of the unemployment, it was 6 percent, the next 2 years up to 11.6, and today, you managed to leave it back with 5 percent, which is the lowest ever.

President Obama. Four-point-nine.

Q. Four-point-nine. [*Laughter*] The GDP of your country, you managed to grow it almost 3—2.6 trillion. So, on the contrary—of course, there is nothing to compare between Greek and United States economy—but on the contrary, Greece, the last 7 years is following the treatment of the financial institutions—the foreign financial institutions, and we're still in the eye of the storm of the recession. So, in the same time, there is no discussion about the

debt relief. So my question is, how far this economy can go with this reform programs without any discussion of the debt relief? How far this relationship between Greece and the foreign institutions can last?

President Obama. Well, you're right that it—you can't entirely compare between the United States and Greece for a range of reasons, not just because of the size of the economy. We went through a very severe contraction. We were losing 800,000 jobs a month when I came into office. In fact, the economy was contracting faster than it did during the Great Depression. But we were able to intervene, apply lessons learned, and stabilize and then begin growth again.

But I do believe that one of the lessons we tried to apply is that it is important to combine structural reforms and good fiscal stewardship with a growth strategy. Because when your economy is growing and more revenue is coming in, that helps relieve debt. And sometimes, if your only approach is cutting spending at a time when the economy is contracting, then the economy will contract further, and that could add debt.

Now, the advantage we had is that the dollar is the reserve currency of the world. Even in the midst of crisis, people were still buying U.S. Treasury bills. We were not part of a broader arrangement like the euro zone. So it gave us some additional flexibility.

And—but the key lesson that we've drawn from our experience—and it's true that we recovered faster and better, frankly, than most of Europe—is that particularly when the economy is still struggling, putting people back to work, finding ways to spur economic activity ultimately can help to reduce the structural deficits and debts that countries experience.

I think the path that Greece is currently on is the right one. You've engaged in some very difficult structural reforms. And I think the Greek people—although it is difficult and challenging, and the politics of it, I know, are not good—should appreciate the fact that in this global economy, the Greek economy was going to have to go through some structural reforms. We all do, all the time. The United States has to go through structural reforms in terms of improving our education system or revamping our infrastructure or looking at some regulations that weren't properly controlling excesses on Wall Street. So we initiated—or health care reform—we had to initiate a whole range of structural reforms.

They're not the same as the ones that Greece has had to do, but these were necessary reforms. And the Prime Minister and his government being willing to move forward on those, I think will lead to Greece being more competitive and a more attractive place for investment in the future. Look, and the Greek people are entrepreneurial. There are enormous resources in this country. My hope is, is that more and more investors around the world see an opportunity to do business here in Greece.

But even as you have those structural reforms, our argument has always been that when an economy contracted this fast, when unemployment is this high, that there also has to be a growth agenda to go with it. And it is very difficult to imagine the kind of growth strategy that's needed without some debt-relief mechanism.

Now, the politics of this are difficult in Europe. And I think in fairness to some of the governments up north that I know are not always popular here in Greece, it's important to recognize that they have their own politics. And their populations and their institutions often are resistant to some of these debt-relief formulas.

But I think that having seen Greece begin many of these difficult steps toward structural reform, having shown a commitment to change, with the Greek people having endured some significant hardships for many years now, there should be an opportunity, I think, for both sides to recognize that if we can come up with a durable solution, as opposed to each year or every 6 months having a new negotiation, that that could potentially be good for everyone. And now that the Greek economy is growing again, the timing may be right.

White House Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest. The first question from a White House

reporter will come from Jerome Cartillier of AFP [Agence France-Presse]. Jerome.

U.S. Presidential Election/United Kingdom Referendum Vote To Leave the European Union/International Populist Movements/Economic Globalization

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

President Obama. Yes.

Q. A lot of people in Europe are still struggling to understand what happened on November 8 in the United States. Do you believe it's the exact same dynamic as Brexit, which happened 6 months before? And does it have to do with leaders struggling to read the mood of their country? Do you have the feeling that, while in power, you underestimated anger or resentment or fear in America?

And to you, Prime Minister Tsipras, President Obama has repeatedly said, including today, that Greece should get substantial debt relief. From your conversation with him today, do you—are you hopeful that he might convince Chancellor Merkel to make a move in that regard later this week?

President Obama. No two countries are identical. And obviously, there's a difference between a referendum on a very complex relationship between Great Britain and the rest of Europe and a Presidential election in the United States.

Presidential elections always turn on personalities. They turn on how campaigns are run. They turn on natural desires for change. If you've had an incumbent who has been there for 8 years, there's a temptation to think, well, let's maybe make a change. I think there are a whole range of factors involved.

But I do think that there is a common theme that we've seen in a lot of advanced economies and that we've seen around the world, although they manifest themselves in different ways. Globalization, combined with technology, combined with social media and constant information, have disrupted people's lives, sometimes in very concrete ways—a manufacturing plant closes, and suddenly, an entire town no longer has what was the primary source of employment—but also psychologically. People are less certain of their national identities or their place in the world. It starts looking different and disorienting.

And there is no doubt that that has produced populist movements, both from the left and the right, in many countries in Europe. When you see a Donald Trump and a Bernie Sanders—very unconventional candidates—have considerable success, then obviously, there's something there that's being tapped into.

A suspicion of globalization, a desire to rein in its excesses, a suspicion of elites and governing institutions that people feel may not be responsive to their immediate needs. And that sometimes gets wrapped up in issues of ethnic identity or religious identity or cultural identity. And that can be a volatile mix.

It's important to recognize, though, that those trends have always been there. And it's the job, I think, of leaders to try to address people's real, legitimate concerns and channel them in the most constructive ways possible.

Did I recognize that there was anger or frustration in the American population? Of course, I did. First of all, we had to fight back from the worst recession since the Great Depression, and I can guarantee you, if your housing values have crashed and you've lost your—most of your pension and you've lost your job, you're going to be pretty angry. And so we bought—fought back and recovered. But that left, I think, fear and anxiety in a lot of people, a sense that the economy wasn't as certain as it could be, and maybe the game was rigged on Wall Street or by special interests in Washington or what have you. And that's been there.

I was also aware of it because of the fact that you have seen some of the rhetoric among Republican and elected officials and activists and media—some of it pretty troubling and not necessarily connected to facts, but being used effectively to mobilize people. And obviously, President-elect Trump tapped into that particular strain within the Republican Party and then was able to broaden that enough and get enough votes to win the election.

The lesson I draw—and I think people can draw a lot of lessons, but maybe one that cuts across countries—is, we have to deal with

issues like inequality. We have to deal with issues of economic dislocation. We have to deal with people's fears that their children won't do as well as they have. The more aggressively and effectively we deal with those issues, the less those fears may channel themselves into counterproductive approaches that pit people against each other.

And frankly, that was—that's been my agenda for the last 8 years. I think raising wages, investing in infrastructure, making sure that people have access to good educations that are—equip them for the jobs of the future—those are all agenda items that would help alleviate some of those economic pressures and dislocations that people are experiencing. The problem was, I couldn't convince the Republican Congress to pass a lot of them.

Now, having said that, people seem to think I did a really—pretty good job. And so there is this mismatch, I think, between frustration and anger. Perhaps the view of the American people was, is that we just need to shake things up. Time will now tell whether the prescriptions that are being offered—whether Brexit or with respect to the U.S. election—ends up actually satisfying those people who have been fearful or angry or concerned. And I think that's going to be an interesting test, because I think I can make a pretty strong argument that the policies we put forward were the right ones; that we've grown faster than just about any advanced economy. The country is indisputably better off, and those folks who voted for the President-elect are better off than they were when I came into office, for the most part. But we'll see whether those facts affect people's calculations in the next election.

Prime Minister Tsipras. You asked if I believe that Angela Merkel could be convinced to make on—but which are the necessary steps for the recovery of the Greek economy. Well, my answer is I'm very optimistic, and this for two reasons. Number one, Angela Merkel is a German politician, and Germans sometimes insist—sometimes they are disagreeable, but they insist—that the agreements must be honored.

And what is expected to happen with Greece is that which was agreed last July, August, in the summer of 2015, that was as soon as Greece shows that it has decided to proceed with the courageous and difficult reforms, that when the first and most difficult review is completed, then decisions will be taken, measures will be implemented to reduce—to provide debt relief to Greece so that Greece can go out into the money markets and for growth to return at a very high rate in the Greek economy.

So the first reason for my optimism is that just as the German Finance Minister used to say, *pacta sunt servanda.* This is a Latin expression, which we sometimes use, where—although we have learned not Latin, but Ancient Greek in our schools.

The second reason for which I'm optimistic is that I have met Angela Merkel to—in person; so has Barack Obama. We worked very close together during the period of the huge refugee crisis. Our cooperation is very good, and therefore, I'm of the opinion that she is a responsible politician, a politician who has a sense of responsibility for Europe and not only for Germany or for the—her political party. And this was the manner in which she dealt with the refugee crisis: with a deep sense of responsibility on the future of Europe and on stability.

And for these two important reasons, I do expect that she will be convinced that these two necessary steps must be made—two steps that will not be a burden to German taxpayers—so that Greece can become not a member—a part of the problem, but a part of the solution for security, for growth, and for resolving the refugee issue, for which Greece plays an important role.

And that is why I'm optimistic, and I expect my optimism to be realized.

Moderator. Mr. Ignoti from Ethnos. Question number three.

Cyprus/U.S. Economy/European Union

Q. It means a lot for us for you to be here. My name is Michael Ignoti. I'm the correspondent in Washington for Ethnos newspaper and Mega TV. You said many times, Mr. President,

that the way the Europeans handled the economy—the economic crisis—had the opposite effect. And also, you talked many times against the austerity. And of course, you are right. Why, in your opinion, you didn't succeed to convince the Europeans to follow your way? And what are you going to do the last 2 months to help Greece and the Greek people? Also, I have a short question about Cyprus. Both of you, you talk about Cyprus. And it's a dear issue for me because I born in Cyprus. How can you convince the President of Turkey to end the occupation of Cyprus, Mr. President?

President Obama. Well, let me take the second question first. This is ultimately a negotiation between Cypriots: Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots. And the good news is that you have two leaders who seem genuinely committed to finding compromises and an approach that would serve both their peoples well. If in fact you can see a meeting of the minds between them, then the issue will be can we make sure that all of us, the international community—Turkey, Greece, the United States—support that agreement in a way that can be ratified by both sides.

And we have invested a lot of time. Vice President Biden has been actively involved in this. We are encouraged by the progress that's been made. I think there's a window in the next few weeks, months, where this issue was actually resolved. And I think if we can find an equitable solution, it won't provide a hundred percent of what either side wants, there may be some mechanisms for a transition from the status quo to the future that both sides envision, but I think it's achievable. And we're going to do everything we can to support the process.

With respect to the economy and Europe, again, I think it's important to recognize that in some ways my job was simpler because, at least in the first 2 years, I had majorities of my party controlling Congress. And I'm just one country. [*Laughter*] So Congress is hard to deal with. [*Laughter*] Dealing with multiple Parliaments and commissions and unions and this and that and the other and—that's very complicated. And so the need, I think, to operate by consensus, the fact that not all European countries were similarly situated, even though their economy shared a currency, that made their task more difficult. And so I want to make sure that I'm clear that I don't envy the hard job that each European leader had in circumstances that oftentimes they had inherited.

What I've tried to do is just offer our best thinking, whether it's in resolving problems in banks quickly—because the quicker you resolve the problems with banks and there's transparency in that process, the faster they recapitalize and are able to make investments. When the economy is shrinking, providing jobs, spending on things like infrastructure can actually increase revenue and drive down debt. And then there's going to be a time at which point that has to be taken care of.

I mean, for example, in the United States, our deficits went up in those first 2 years because we were engaging in a lot of emergency spending. Our deficits have now been reduced by two-thirds, primarily because we started growing again, and we started taking in more tax revenue.

So there's some lessons, I think, that are applicable for all countries. And what we've just tried to do is offer the best advice that we can, understanding that when you're dealing with multiple nations, but a single currency, and then a European Union, where some people are in the currency and some people are not in the currency, and a European Parliament and European Council and—that's a lot of meetings. [*Laughter*] Okay?

Prime Minister Tsipras. I will fully agree with what President Obama has just said in answering the question about Cyprus. It is not a bilateral issue. It is not a problem between Greece and Turkey. It's an international problem, which has been going on for 42 years—as long as I'm alive—and it is a problem of illegal invasion and occupation of the northern part of Cyprus. We make our best, we do our best in—to encourage both sides to help them reach a fair and equitable and sustainable solution.

In my first visit to Cyprus as a Prime Minister, I tried and I did meet over and above the

leaders of the Republic of Cyprus, a number of representatives of the Turkish Cypriot community. And I think that that was the first time that a Greek Prime Minister was meeting with them. We are interested in making sure that the people of Cyprus will be able to live in a reunited Cyprus where they are free, where there's a democracy, freedom, and Cyprus is a member of the European Union.

So I would like to make it clear that as regards Greece, we are in favor of a solution. We stand by the side of President Anastasiadis, who is making the effort, and we are only ready to discuss with Turkey the part which is relevant to us; that is the guarantees. Because since 1959, since 1960, this obsolete issue of guarantees also concerns Greece. But Greece is not the country which has occupied and illegally—invaded and illegally occupied Cyprus.

So I believe that a fair and sustainable solution means a solution without the permanent presence of Turkish troops on the island. And at the same time, I think that the best guarantee for the Cypriot people to feel safe is the potential of a fair and sustainable solution. And if this happens, things will change not only for Cyprus, but for the wider region, in general and for Greek-Turkish relations. This is how we are proceeding.

I believe that, yes, President Erdogan plays an important role, but it is not my responsibility to convince him, Mr. Ignoti.

Mr. Earnest. The final question will come from Chris Jansing with NBC News.

U.S. Presidential Election/The President's World View

Q. Thank you. Mr. President, ever since the election there have been protests on the streets of the United States. And earlier this year, Matt Lauer asked you if you believed you helped create the environment for Donald Trump to run. And you answered, "Talk to me if he wins . . . about how responsible I feel about it." I wonder, do you feel any responsibility for the election of Donald Trump? And in the broader context, when you see his election, when you look at politicians like Theresa May, Marine Le Pen, do you believe that it is either a movement away from or an outright rejection of your world view?

And, Mr. Prime Minister, you've also talked about your concerns about the rise of the extreme right in general. And about Donald Trump, in particular, you said, "I hope we will not face this evil." Do you believe Donald Trump or his ideas are still evil? And if so, do you believe your comments and the comments of other European leaders will make it more difficult for you to work with him? Thank you.

President Obama. Well, first of all, I think it's fair to say that I was surprised by the election results, and I've said so. I still don't feel responsible for what the President-elect says or does. But I do feel a responsibility as President of the United States to make sure that I facilitate a good transition and I present to him as well as the American people my best thinking, my best ideas about how you move the country forward, to speak out with respect to areas where I think the Republican Party is wrong, but to pledge to work with them on those things that I think will advance the causes of security and prosperity and justice and inclusiveness in America.

I think it's important not to start drawing parallels, for example, between Theresa May, a fairly traditional conservative politician, who is now Prime Minister, and Le Pen in France. Those aren't the same, and the situation in each country is different.

I do think, as I've said before, that history doesn't move in a straight line. It zigs and zags and sometimes goes forward and sometimes moves back, sideways. I think at times of significant stress, people are going to be looking for something—and they don't always know exactly what it is that they're looking for—and they may opt for change even if they're not entirely confident what that change will bring.

As you know, throughout my Presidency—I'm sure as a matter of convenience—I generally haven't paid a lot of attention to the polls. But since your question is directly related to the notion of a rejection of my world view, last I checked, a pretty healthy majority of the American people agree with my world view on a whole bunch of things. And I know that that

begs the question, well, how is it that somebody who appears to have a very different world view just got elected? As I said, sometimes, people just feel as if we want to try something to see if we can shake things up. And that, I suspect, was a significant phenomenon.

I do believe, separate and apart from any particular election or movement, that we are going to have to guard against a rise in a crude sort of nationalism or ethnic identity or tribalism that is built around an "us" and a "them." And I will never apologize for saying that the future of humanity and the future of the world is going to be defined by what we have in common as opposed to those things that separate us and ultimately lead us into conflict.

Take Europe. We know what happens when Europeans start dividing themselves up and emphasizing their differences and seeing a competition between various countries in a zero-sum way. The 20th century was a bloodbath. And for all the frustrations and failures of the project to unify Europe, the last five decades have been periods of unprecedented peace, growth, and prosperity in Europe.

In the United States, we know what happens when we start dividing ourselves along lines of race or religion or ethnicity. It's dangerous. Not just for the minority groups that are subjected to that kind of discrimination or, in some cases in the past, violence, but because we then don't realize our potential as a country when we're preventing Blacks or Latinos or Asians or gays or women from fully participating in the project of building American life.

So my vision is right on that issue. And it may not always win the day in the short term in any particular political circumstance, but I'm confident it will win the day over the long term. Because societies in which we are able to unify ourselves around values and ideals and character and how we treat each other and cooperation and innovation ultimately are going to be more successful than societies that don't.

That's my strong belief. And I think I've got pretty good evidence to prove it.

Prime Minister Tsipras. To be honest, I know very little of Donald Trump. I got to know his aggressive manner and the manner in which he defended some unconventional points of view during the election period. Some have told me that I should have read his book before going to bargain in Brussels, "The Art of the Deal." I didn't. But I don't think that that was decisive to the result.

Still, let me point out that it was one thing what we knew about Donald Trump when he was seeking to become the candidate for the Republican Party; another thing during the election period; and now that he is the President-elect; and it's quite another when he will be the President of a country that is a major player, a global player.

So that is why, contrary to some of my colleagues in Europe, I did not rush to repeat some of the criticisms that many of us have made during the election period about Donald Trump. I also believe that if someone would want to rapidly change the foreign policy of a country such as the United States—which is very difficult—and although some of us in Europe may fear that this may happen, what we should be doing is build bridges, not walls. We are proceeding on the basis of common values. We have more to gain from partnership, from promoting our partnership in dealing with the big global challenges.

I therefore believe in the near future, not much is going to change in the relations between EU, Greece, and the United States of America. These are relations that were forged under very difficult conditions and rely on the common values of our people.

President Obama. Thank you, my friend.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 4:20 p.m. at the Maximos Mansion. In his remarks, the President referred to Sen. Bernard Sanders, in his former capacity as a Democratic Presidential candidate; Prime Minister Theresa May of the United Kingdom; and Marine Le Pen, president, National Front political party in France. Prime

Minister Tsipras referred to Minister of Finance Wolfgang Schaeuble of Germany; and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey. A reporter referred to Matt Lauer, coanchor, NBC's "Today" program. Prime Minister Tsipras and the moderator spoke in Greek, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks at a State Dinner Hosted by President Prokopios Pavlopoulos of Greece in Athens

November 15, 2016

President Pavlopoulos. Mr. President, I welcome you to Athens and to the Presidency of the Republic, as the President of the United States of America, who has constantly and consistently served with respect for man, for the consolidation of peace and the defense of democracy, and of its twin brother, the social rule of law, by holding in check the extreme inequalities which directly threaten social cohesion. We fully share those ideals.

Let me be even more specific. In this deep and prolonged economic and social crisis, which is plaguing our country and our people, for which we are far from being the only ones to blame, I would like to point out the following three things.

First, we deeply believe in representative democracy and in every one of its institutional dimensions. We are especially inspired by your emblematic constitutional tradition of checks and balances. It is these that shield popular sovereignty and parliamentary rule, as well as the independence of justice from many arbitrary interference by the executive or, even more, by the various instruments of globalization which lack any democratic legitimacy.

Second, we continue our unwavering course within the European Union, and its hard core, the euro zone, despite the huge economic and social burden of a mostly wrong and dead end austerity policy. And in respect of this, Mr. President, I'm very happy to hear—I was very happy to hear you point this out, and I hope that your words will urge our European partners to move in the right direction.

Alongside our partners, with which we share the true and selfless European path, we fight to restore the values and principles which were the foundations of European integration, mainly the respect of—for man and for social justice. These are the principles which will keep the nightmare of fascism and Nazism left behind by World War II forever in the dismal past. We never forget the decisive contribution of the United States of America in that war so that Europe could hold back the fate of what Mark Mazower called the "Dark Continent." We will always remember Omaha Beach in Normandy.

Third, Mr. President, we are responding with uncompromising dignity to the huge refugee crisis, which you have called of epic dimension, which is mainly the result of the war in Syria. We expect solidarity by our European partners, and we expect that they will open up their minds and listen to your opinion. In this, we are inspired by the ancient Greek institution of the supplement. At the same time, we are doing our part in the fight against the barbarism of jihadism, which is committing crimes against humanity.

But, Mr. President, in order to defend refugees and to stop terrorism, the war in Syria and in the wider region must end. This is the common objective, and this requires harmonious cooperation of the U.S., the EU, and Russia. And we're happy that you were able to fully understand this truth and have turned it into action with your wise and also visionary policy, and therefore, we start seeing the first results. Maybe late, but it is never too late.

Mr. President, we urge you from here, from Athens, with its eternal symbol of Parthenon—the Parthenon of democracy and civilization—to continue to serve the same ideals after the end of your term. Your appeal will continue into the future. In this future and very promising journey, we would like you to take Greece

along. And at this point, I'd like to remember the words of the poet Odysseas Elytis: Please do not forget our country.

I will, therefore, conclude by—my address by reminding you of what André Malraux said in his memorable speech at the inauguration of the illumination of the Acropolis on 29th of—March 29, 1958: "A secret Greece resides in the heart of all men of the West." It is this secret Greece that the Greek people offer you as a gift during this visit, precisely because we deem it worthy of the U.S. President, Barack Obama.

Mr. President, on behalf of the Greek people, I wish you personal health and success. And I ask you to convey the Greek people's sincere warm wishes for growth and prosperity to our committed and great friends, the American people.

Once again, welcome, Mr. President.

President Obama. Kalispera. [*Laughter*] Mr. President, Mr. Prime Minister, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen: Once again, it is a great honor to be in Greece. And on behalf of myself and my delegation, on behalf of the American people, thank you for the warmth that you've shown us on this visit.

Of course, your hospitality comes as no surprise. As Pericles said in his famous oration many centuries ago: "In nobility of spirit, we differ from most others in the way we conduct ourselves towards other people. We make friendships not by receiving kindness from others, but by conferring it on others." And we certainly have felt the kindness of the Greek people conferred on us today.

I'll have more to say in my speech tomorrow about the ties of history and heritage that bind our peoples together. Of course, that does include our love of the Olympics. Greeks rightly take pride as the founder of the Games and in Leonidas of Rhodes who, for 2,000 years, held the record for winning 12 individual gold medals, the most of any athlete. And we Americans take pride in Michael Phelps, who set the new record this summer.

Besides that friendly competition, we are deeply grateful for our alliance with the Greek people. I think that we have inspired each other to reach for independence, stood in solidarity during war and peace, in good times and in bad, including these very difficult years for the Greek people. And tonight I want you to know that as you work to move your country forward, you will always have the support and friendship of the United States.

I want to close with a moment from our shared history. In 1821, as Greece began its fight for independence, a Greek patriot wrote a letter to the American Government appealing for assistance. "Although a broad sea separates us," he wrote, "your virtues, Americans, are close to ours." And he added, "We consider you as friends, copatriots and brothers."

So——

[*At this point, the interpreter began translating President Obama's remarks. President Obama then spoke briefly as follows.*]

Please.

[*The interpreter continued. President Obama then resumed his remarks as follows.*]

So, in appreciation for our friendship and your hospitality, if I might propose a toast: To the virtues and values that unite us across a broad sea. May Greeks and Americans always be there for each other: as friends, as copatriots, and brothers and sisters. *Stin ygeia sas*. [*Laughter*] Cheers.

[*President Obama offered a toast.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:37 p.m. in the ballroom at the Presidential Mansion. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Alexios Tsipras of Greece; and Michael F. Phelps II, swimmer, 2016 U.S. Olympic Team. President Pavlopoulos referred to Mark A. Mazower, Ira D. Wallach Professor of History, Columbia University. President Pavlopoulos spoke in Greek, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks in Athens, Greece
November 16, 2016

The President. Hey! Thank you very much. Thank you. Please, please have a seat. Thank you.

Audience member. Chicago!

The President. Chicago, yes. [*Laughter*]

Hello, Greece! Thank you. *Yia sas! Kalispera!* [*Laughter*] To the Government and the people of Greece—including Prime Minister Tsipras, who I thank for his partnership and for being here—along with so many young people, the future of Greece: I want to thank you for your warm and generous welcome.

As many of you know, this is my final trip overseas as President of the United States, and I was determined on my last trip to come to Greece partly because I've heard about the legendary hospitality of the Greek people, your *philoxenia.* [*Laughter*] Partly because I had to see the Acropolis and the Parthenon. But also because I came here with gratitude for all that Greece—"this small, great world"—has given to humanity through the ages.

Our hearts have been moved by the tragedies of Aeschylus and Euripides. Our minds have been opened by the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides. Our understanding of the world and our place in it has been expanded by Socrates and Aristotle.

In the United States, we're especially grateful for the friendship of so many proud Greek Americans. In my hometown of Chicago, you can find them in Greektown—[*laughter*]—with their foustanellas. [*Laughter*] And together, we've celebrated Greek Independence Day at the White House. We've had some spanakopita and some ouzo. [*Laughter*] Greek Americans have worn the uniform to keep our country free. Greek Americans have marched with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., to make us more just. Greek or American, we're all cheering for Giannis Antetokounmpo, who is—[*laughter*]—who seems to be getting better each year. [*Laughter*] And if anyone seeks an example of our shared spirit, our resilience, they need look no further than New York City, near Ground Zero, where the Greek Orthodox church of St. Nicholas, once in ruins, is now rising again.

Most of all, we're indebted to Greece for the most precious of gifts: the truth—the understanding—that as individuals of free will, we have the right and the capacity to govern ourselves. For it was here, 25 centuries ago, in the rocky hills of this city, that a new idea emerged: *demokratia. Kratos*—[*applause*].

Kratos—the power, the right to rule—comes from *demos*, the people. The notion that we are citizens: not servants, but stewards of our society. The concept of citizenship: that we have both rights and responsibilities. The belief in equality before the law, not just for a few, but for the many; not just for the majority, but also the minority. These are all concepts that grew out of this rocky soil.

Of course, the earliest forms of democracy here in Athens were far from perfect, just as the early forms of democracy in the United States were far from perfect. The rights of ancient Athens were not extended to women or to slaves. But Pericles explained, "Our constitution . . . favors the many instead of the few; this is why it is called a democracy."

Athenians also knew that, however noble, ideas alone were not enough. To have meaning, principles must be enshrined in laws and protected by institutions, and advanced through civic participation. And so they gathered in a great assembly to debate and decide affairs of state, each citizen with the right to speak, casting their vote with a show of hands or choosing a pebble: white for yes, black for no. Laws were etched in stone for all to see and abide by. Courts with citizen jurors upheld that rule of law.

Politicians weren't always happy because sometimes the stones could be used to ostracize—[*laughter*]—banish those who did not behave themselves.

But across the millennia that followed, different views of power and governance have often prevailed. Throughout human history, there have been those who argue that people

cannot handle democracy, that they cannot handle self-determination, they need to be told what to do; a ruler has to maintain order through violence or coercion or an iron fist. There's been a different concept of government that says might makes right or that unchecked power can be passed through bloodlines. There's been the belief that some are superior by virtue of race or faith or ethnicity, and those beliefs so often have been used to justify conquest and exploitation and war.

But through all this history, the flame first lit here in Athens never died. It was ultimately nurtured by a great Enlightenment. It was fanned by America's Founders, who declared that "We the People" shall rule; that "all men are created equal" and endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights.

Now, at times, even today, those ideals are challenged. We've been told that these are Western ideas. We've been told that some cultures are not equipped for democratic governance and actually prefer authoritarian rule. And I will say that after 8 years of being President of the United States, having traveled around the globe, it is absolutely true that every country travels its own path; every country has its own traditions. But what I also believe, after 8 years, is that the basic longing to live with dignity, the fundamental desire to have control of our lives and our future and to want to be a part of determining the course of our communities and our nations—these yearnings are universal. They burn in every human heart.

It's why a Greek bishop atop a mountain raised the flag of independence. It's why peoples from the Americas to Africa to Asia threw off the yoke of colonialism. It's why people behind an Iron Curtain marched in solidarity and tore down that wall and joined you in a great union of democracies. It's why, today, we support the right of Ukrainians to choose their own destiny; why we partner with Tunisians and the people of Myanmar as they make historic transitions to democracy.

This has been my foreign policy during my Presidency. By necessity, we work with all countries, and many of them are not democracies. Some of them are democracies in the sense they have elections, but not democracies in the sense of actually permitting participation and dissent. But our trajectory as a country has been to support the efforts of those who believe in self-governance, who believe in those ideas that began here so many years ago.

And it is not simply a matter of us being true to our values. It's not just a matter of idealism. I believe it is practical for the United States to support democracies, because history shows us that countries with democratic governance tend to be more just and more stable and more successful.

Open, democratic societies can deliver more prosperity, because when people are free to think for themselves and share ideas and discover and create—the young people who are here, what they're able to do through the Internet and technology—that's when innovation is unleashed, when economies truly flourish. That's when new products and new services and new ideas wash through an economy. In contrast to regimes that rule by coercion, democracies are rooted in consent of the governed. Citizens know that there's a path for peaceful change, including the moral force of nonviolence. And that brings a stability that so often can facilitate economic growth.

The history of the past two centuries indicates that democracies are less likely to fight wars among themselves. So more democracy is good for the people of the world, but it's also good for our national security, which is why America's closest friends are democracies like Greece. It's why we stand together in NATO, an alliance of democracies.

In recent years, we've made historic investments in NATO, increased America's presence in Europe, and today's NATO—the world's greatest alliance—is as strong and as ready as it's ever been. And I am confident that just as America's commitment to the transatlantic alliance has endured for seven decades—whether it's been under a Democratic or Republican administration—that commitment will continue, including our pledge and our treaty obligation to defend every ally.

Our democracies show that we're stronger than terrorists and fundamentalists and absolutists,

who can't tolerate difference, can't tolerate ideas that vary from their own, who try to change people's way of life through violence and would make us betray or shrink from our values. Democracy is stronger than organizations like ISIL.

Because our democracies are inclusive, we're able to welcome people and refugees in need to our countries. And nowhere have we seen that compassion more evident than here in Greece. The Greek people's generosity towards refugees arriving on your shores has inspired the world. That doesn't mean that you should be left on your own, and a—only a truly collective response by Europe and the world can ensure that these desperate people receive the support that they need. Greece cannot be expected to bear the bulk of the burden alone, but the fact that you are a democracy opens your heart to people in need in a way that might not otherwise be the case.

Just as democracies are premised on the peaceful resolution of disagreements within our societies, we also believe that cooperation and dialogue is the best way to address challenges between nations. And so it is my belief that democracies are more likely to try to resolve conflicts between nations in a way that does not result in war. That's how, with diplomacy, we were able to shut down Iran's nuclear weapons program without firing a shot. With diplomacy, the United States opened relations with Cuba. With diplomacy, we joined Greece and nearly 200 nations in the most ambitious agreement ever to save our planet from climate change.

And speaking of climate change, I would point out that there is a connection between democracy and science. The premise of science is that we observe and we test our hypotheses, our ideas. We base decisions on facts, not superstition; not what our ideology tells us, but rather, what we can observe. And at a time when the globe is shrinking and more and more we're going to have to take collective action to deal with problems like climate change, the presence of a democratic debate allows the science to flourish and to shape our collective responses.

Now, democracy, like all human institutions, is imperfect. It can be slow. It can be frustrating. It can be hard. It can be messy. Politicians tend to be unpopular in democracies, regardless of party, because, by definition, democracies require that you don't get a hundred percent of what you want. It requires compromise. Winston Churchill famously said that democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others. [*Laughter*] And in a multiethnic, multiracial, multicultural society, like the United States, democracy can be especially complicated. Believe me, I know. [*Laughter*]

But it is better than the alternatives because it allows us to peacefully work through our differences and move closer to our ideals. It allows us to test new ideas, and it allows us to correct for mistakes. Any action by a President or any result of an election or any legislation that has proven flawed can be corrected through the process of democracy.

And throughout our history, it's how we have come to see that all people are created equal, even though, when we were founded, that was not the case. We could work to expand the rights that were established in our founding to African Americans and to women, to Americans with disabilities, to Native Americans—why all Americans now have the freedom to marry the person they love. It's why we've welcomed people of all races and all religions and all backgrounds and immigrants, who strive to give their children a better life and who make our country stronger.

And so here, where democracy was born, we affirm once more the rights and the ideals and the institutions upon which our way of life endures: freedom of speech and assembly, because true legitimacy can only come from the people, who must never be silenced; a free press to expose injustice and corruption and hold leaders accountable; freedom of religion, because we are all equal in the eyes of God; independent judiciaries to uphold rule of law and human rights; separation of powers to limit the reach of any one branch of government; free and fair elections, because citizens must be able to choose their own leaders, even if your candidate doesn't always win. [*Laughter*]

We compete hard in campaigns in America and here in Greece. But after the election, democracy depends on a peaceful transition of power, especially when you don't get the results you want.

And as may—you may have noticed, the next American President and I could not be more different. [*Laughter*] We have very different points of view, but American democracy is bigger than any one person. And that's why we have a tradition of the outgoing President welcoming the new one in, as I did last week, and why, in the coming weeks, my administration will do everything we can to support the smoothest transition possible, because that's how democracy has to work.

And that's why, as hard as it can be sometimes, it's important for young people, in particular, who are just now becoming involved in the lives of their countries, to understand that progress follows a winding path—sometimes forward, sometimes back—but as long as we retain our faith in democracy, as long as we retain our faith in the people, as long as we don't waver from those central principles that ensure a lively, open debate, then our future will be okay, because it remains the most effective form of government ever devised by man.

It is true, of course, over the last several years that we've seen democracies faced with serious challenges. And I want to mention two that have an impact here in Greece, have an impact in the United States, and are having an impact around the world.

The first involves the paradox of a modern global economy. The same forces of globalization and technology and integration that have delivered so much progress, have created so much wealth, have also revealed deep fault lines. Around the world, integration and closer cooperation and greater trade and commerce and the Internet all have improved the lives of billions of people, lifted families from extreme poverty, cured diseases, helped people live longer, gave them more access to education and opportunity than at any time in human history.

I've often said to young people in the United States, if you had to choose a moment in history to be born and you did not know ahead of time who you would be—you didn't know whether you were going to be born into a wealthy family or a poor family, what country you'd be born, whether you were going to be a man or a woman—if you had to choose blindly what moment you'd want to be born, you'd choose now. Because the world has never, collectively, been wealthier, better educated, healthier, less violent than it is today. That's hard to imagine, given what we see in the news, but it's true. And a lot of that has to do with the developments of a integrated, global economy.

But trends underway for decades have meant that in many countries and in many communities there have been enormous disruptions. Technology and automation means that goods can be produced with fewer workers. It means jobs and manufacturing can move across borders where wages are lower or rights are less protected. And that means that workers and unions oftentimes have less leverage to bargain for better wages, better benefits, have more difficulty competing in the global marketplace. Hard-working families worry their kids may not be better off than they were because of this global competition.

What we've also seen is that this global integration is increasing the tendencies towards inequality, both between nations and within nations, at an accelerated pace. And when we see people—global elites, wealthy corporations—seemingly living by a different set of rules, avoiding taxes, manipulating loopholes; when the rich and the powerful appear to game the system and accumulate vast wealth while middle and working class families struggle to make ends meet—this feeds a profound sense of injustice and a feeling that our economies are increasingly unfair.

And this inequality now constitutes one of the greatest challenges to our economies and to our democracies. An inequality that was once tolerated because people didn't know how unequal things were now won't be tolerated because everybody has a cell phone and can see how unequal things are. The awareness that people have in the smallest African village,

they can see how people in London or New York are living. The poorest child in any of our countries now has a sense of what other people have that they don't. So not only is there increasing inequality, but also there is greater awareness of inequality. And that's a volatile mix for our democracies.

And this is why addressing inequality has been one of the key areas of focus for my economic policy. In our countries, in America and in most advanced market economies, we want people to be rewarded for their achievement. We think that people should be rewarded if they come up with a new product or a new service that is popular and helps a lot of people. But when a CEO of a company now makes more money in a single day than a typical worker does in an entire year, when it's harder for workers to climb their way up the economic ladder, when they see a factory close that used to support an entire city or town, that fuels the feeling that globalization only benefits those at the top. And the reaction can drag down a country's growth and make recessions more likely. It can also lead to politics that create an unhealthy competition between countries. Rather than a win-win situation, people perceive that if you're winning, I'm losing, and barriers come up and walls come up.

And in advanced economies, there are at times movements from both the left and the right to put a stop to integration and to push back against technology and to try to bring back jobs and industries that have been disappearing for decades. So this impulse to pull back from a globalized world is understandable. If people feel that they're losing control of their future, they will push back. We have seen it here in Greece. We've seen it across Europe. We've seen it in the United States. We saw it in the vote in Britain to leave the EU.

But given the nature of technology, it is my assertion that it's not possible to cut ourselves off from one another. We now are living in a global supply chain. Our growth comes through innovation and ideas that are crossing borders all the time. The jobs of tomorrow will inevitably be different from the jobs of the past. So we can't look backwards for answers, we have to look forward.

We cannot sever the connections that have enabled so much progress and so much wealth. For when competition for resources is perceived as zero sum, we put ourselves on a path to conflict both within countries and between countries. So I firmly believe that the best hope for human progress remains open markets, combined with democracy and human rights. But I have argued that the current path of globalization demands a course correction. In the years and decades ahead, our countries have to make sure that the benefits of an integrated global economy are more broadly shared by more people and that the negative impacts are squarely addressed.

And we know—[*applause*]—and we actually know the path to building more inclusive economies. It's just we too often don't have the political will or desire to get it done. We know we need bold policies that spur growth and support jobs. We know that we need to give workers more leverage and better wages, and that, in fact, if you give workers better wages, businesses do better too because their customers now have money to spend.

We know that we have to invest more in our people: the education of our young people, the skills and training to compete in the global economy. We have to make sure that it is easy for young people who are eager to learn and eager to work to get the education that they need, the training that they need, without taking on huge amounts of debt.

We know that we have to encourage entrepreneurship so that it's easier to start a business and do business. We know that we have to strengthen the social compact so that the safety net that is available for people, including quality health care and retirement benefits are there even if people aren't working in the same job for 30 years or 40 years or 50 years.

We have to modernize our infrastructure, which will put people back to work. We have to commit to the science and research and development that sparks new industries.

In our trading relationships, we have to make sure that trade works for us and not

against us. And that means insisting on high standards in all countries to support jobs, strong protections for workers, strong protections for the environment so that even as we freely trade, people and workers in all countries see the benefits of trade in their own lives, not just benefits for the bottom line of large, multinational corporations.

These are the kinds of policies, this is the work that I've pursued throughout my time as President. Keep in mind, I took office in the midst of the worst crisis since the Great Depression. And we pursued a recovery that has been shared now by the vast majority of Americans. We put people back to work building bridges and roads. We passed tax cuts for the middle class. We asked the wealthiest Americans to pay a little more taxes, their fair share. We intervened to save our auto industry, but insisted that the auto industry become more energy efficient, produce better cars that reduce pollution.

We put in place policies to help students with loans and protect consumers from fraud. We passed the strongest Wall Street reforms in history so that the excesses and abuses that triggered the global financial crisis never happen again or at least don't start on Wall Street.

And today, our businesses have created more than 15 million new jobs. Incomes last year in America rose faster than any time since 1968. Poverty fell at the fastest rate since 1968. Inequality is being narrowed. And we've also begun to close the pay gap between men and women.

We declared that health care in America is a privilege not for the few, but a right for everybody. Today, our uninsured rate is at the lowest levels on record. And we've done all this while doubling our production of clean energy, lowering our carbon pollution faster than any advanced nation. So we've proven that you can grow the economy and reduce the carbon emissions that cause climate change at the same time.

Now, I say all this not because we've solved every problem. Our work is far from complete. There are still too many people in America who are worried about their futures, still too many people who are working at wages that don't get them above the poverty line, still too many young people who don't see opportunity. But the policies I describe point the direction for where we need to go in building inclusive economies. And that's how democracies can deliver the prosperity and hope that our people need. And when people have opportunity and they feel confidence in the future, they are less likely to turn on each other, and they're less likely to appeal to some of the darker forces that exist in all our societies, those that can tear us apart.

Here in Greece, you're undergoing similar transformations. The first step has been to build a foundation that allows you to return to robust economic growth. And we don't need to recount all the causes of the economic crisis here in Greece. If we're honest, we can acknowledge that it was a mix of both internal and external forces. The Greek economy and the levels of debt had become unsustainable. And in this global economy, investment and jobs flow to countries where governments are efficient, not bloated, where the rules are clear. To stay competitive, to attract investment that creates jobs, Greece had to start a reform process.

Of course, the world, I don't think, fully appreciates the extraordinary pain these reforms have involved or the tremendous sacrifices that you, the Greek people, have made. I've been aware of it, and I've been proud of all that my administration has done to try to support Greece in these efforts. And part of the purpose of my visit is to highlight for the world the important steps that have been taken here in Greece.

Today, the budget is back in surplus. Parliament passed reforms to make the economy more competitive. Yes, there is still much more work to do. I want to commend Prime Minister Tsipras for the very difficult reforms his government is pursuing to put the economy on a firmer footing. Now, as Greece works to attract more investment and to prevent old imbalances from reemerging and to put your economy on a stronger foundation, you'll continue to have the full support of the United States.

And at the same time, I will continue to urge creditors to take the steps needed to put Greece on a path towards sustained economic recovery. So, as Greece continues to implement reforms, the IMF has said that debt relief will be crucial to get Greece back to growth. They are right. It is important because if reforms here are going to be sustained, people need to see hope, and they need to see progress. And the young people who are in attendance here today and all across the country need to know there is a future; there is an education and jobs that are worthy of your incredible potential. You don't have to travel overseas. You can put roots right here in your home, in Greece, and succeed.

And I'm confident that if you stay the course, as hard as it has been, Greece will see brighter days. Because in this magnificent hall and center, this symbol of the Greek culture and resilience, we're reminded that just as your strength and resolve have allowed you to overcome great odds throughout your history, nothing can break the spirit of the Greek people. You will overcome this period of challenge just as you have other challenges in the past.

So economics is something that will be central to preserving our democracies. When our economies don't work, our democracies become distorted and, in some cases, break down. But this brings me to another pressing challenge that our democracies face: How do we ensure that our diverse, multicultural, multiracial, multireligious world and our diverse nations uphold both the rights of individuals and a fundamental civic adherence to a common creed that binds us together?

Democracy is simplest where everybody thinks alike, looks alike, eats the same food, worships the same God. Democracy becomes more difficult when there are people coming from a variety of backgrounds and trying to live together. In our globalized world, with the migration of people and the rapid movement of ideas and cultures and traditions, we see increasingly this blend of forces mixing together in ways that often enrich our societies, but also cause tensions.

In the Information Age, the unprecedented exchange of information can also accentuate differences or seem to threaten cherished ways of life. It used to be that you might not know how people in another part of your country, or in the cities versus the countryside, were living. Now, everybody knows how everybody is living, and everybody can feel threatened sometimes if people don't do things exactly the way they do things. And they start asking themselves questions about their own identity. And it can create a volatile politics.

Faced with this new reality where cultures clash, it's inevitable that some will seek a comfort in nationalism or tribe or ethnicity or sect. In countries that are held together by borders that were drawn by colonial powers, including many countries in the Middle East and in Africa, it can be tempting to fall back on the perceived safety of enclaves and tribal divisions.

In a world of widening inequality, there's a growing suspicion or even disdain for elites and institutions that seem remote from the daily lives of ordinary people. What an irony it is, at a time when we can reach out to people in the most remote corners of the planet, so many citizens feel disconnected from their own governments.

So, just as we have to have an inclusive economic strategy, we have to have an exclusive political and cultural strategy. In all of our capitals, we have to keep making government more open, more efficient, more effective in responding to the daily needs of citizens. Governing institutions—whether in Athens, Brussels, London, Washington—have to be responsive to the concerns of citizens. People have to know that they're being heard.

Here in Europe, even with today's challenges, I believe that by virtue of the progress it has delivered over the decades—the stability it has provided, the security it's reinforced—that European integration and the European Union remains one of the great political and economic achievements of human history. And today more than ever, the world needs a Europe that is strong and prosperous and democratic.

But I think all institutions in Europe have to ask themselves: How can we make sure that

people within individual countries feel as if their voices are still being heard, that their identities are being affirmed, that the decisions that are being made that will have a critical impact on their lives are not so remote that they have no ability to impact them?

We have to make clear that governments exist to serve the interests of citizens and not the other way around. And so this is why, as President of the United States, I've pursued initiatives like the Open Government Partnership that promotes transparency and accountability so that ordinary people know more about the decisions that affect their lives. That's why both at home and around the world, we have taken steps to fight corruption that can rot a society from within.

As authoritarian governments work to close space that citizens depend upon to organize and have their voices heard, we've begun the work of empowering civil society to defend democratic values and promote solutions to the problems within our communities. And as so many people around the world sometimes are tempted by cynicism and not being involved because they think that politicians and government don't care about them, we've created networks for young leaders and invested in young entrepreneurs, because we believe that the hope and renewal of our societies begins with the voices of youth.

In closing, our globalized world is passing through a time of profound change. Yes, there is uncertainty and there is unease, and none of us can know the future. History does not move in a straight line. Civil rights in America did not move in a straight line. Democracy in Greece did not move in a straight line. The evolution of a unified Europe certainly has not moved in a straight line. And progress is never guaranteed. Progress has to be earned by every generation. But I believe history gives us hope.

Twenty-five centuries after Athens first pointed the way, 250 years after the beginning of the great American journey, my faith and my confidence, my certainty in our democratic ideals and universal values remain undiminished. I believe more strongly than ever that Dr. King was right when he said that "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice." But it bends towards justice not because it is inevitable, but because we bend it towards justice. Not because there are not going to be barriers to achieving justice, but because there will be people, generation after generation, who have the vision and the courage and the will to bend the arc of our lives in the direction of a better future.

In the United States and in every place I've visited these last 8 years, I have met citizens—especially young people—who have chosen hope over fear, who believe that they can shape their own destiny, who refuse to accept the world as it is and are determined to remake it as it should be. They have inspired me.

In every corner of the world, I have met people who in their daily lives demonstrate that despite differences of race or religion or creed or color, we have the capacity to see each other in ourselves. Like the woman here in Greece who said of the refugees arriving on these shores: "We live under the same Sun. We fall in love under the same Moon. We are all human. We have to help these people." Women like that give me hope.

In all of our communities, in all of our countries, I still believe there's more of what Greeks call *philotimo*: love and respect and kindness for family and community and country, and a sense that we're all in this together, with obligations to each other. *Philotimo*. I see it every day, and that gives me hope.

Because in the end, it is up to us. It's not somebody else's job, it's not somebody else's responsibility, but it's the citizens of our countries and the citizens of the world to bend that arc of history towards justice.

And that's what democracy allows us to do. That's why the most important office in any country is not President or Prime Minister. The most important title is citizen. And in all of our nations, it will always be our citizens who decide the kind of countries we will be, the ideals that we will reach for, and the values that will define us. In this great, imperfect, but necessary system of self-government, power and progress will always come from the *demos*—from we, the people. And I'm confident

that as long as we are true to that system of self-government, that our futures will be bright.

Thank you very much. *Zito i ellas.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:03 p.m. at the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center. In his remarks, he referred to Giannis Antetokounmpo, forward, National Basketball Association's Milwaukee Bucks; President-elect Donald J. Trump; and Athens, Greece, resident Melia Eleftheriadi. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

The President's News Conference With Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany in Berlin, Germany
November 17, 2016

Chancellor Merkel. Ladies and gentlemen, I'm delighted to be able to welcome today for the sixth time, the President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, to Germany, in his capacity as President of the United States. Let us remind ourselves: After the—visiting us in his capacity as candidate here in Berlin, we then met in Baden-Baden. We then met in Dresden and Buchenwald. We saw each other when he gave a speech at the Brandenburg Gate. In Elmau, we met again at the G–7. Then, Hannover Faire comes to mind. And today he is again here in Berlin.

So 8 years are coming to a close. This is the last visit of Barack Obama to our country, to Germany. I am very glad that he chose Germany as one of the, sort of, stopovers on this trip. And thank you very much. Thank you for the friendship you've always demonstrated. Thank you for the reliable friendship and partnership you demonstrated in very difficult hours of our relationship. So let me again pay tribute to what we've been able to achieve, to what we discussed, to what we were able to bring about.

Difficult hours come to mind, as I said, of those that had a bearing on the cooperation of our intelligence services, and I'm very grateful that Barack Obama, as President, very much put protection of privacy on the agenda today. Due to the fact of Islamist terrorism all over the world through the threat of IS, we recognize how important the cooperation with intelligence services, and here first and foremost, also with the services of the United States is. We need this cooperation. And we say this from a German perspective very clearly and unequivocally: Our bilateral relations are very good; they're very close.

In the areas of business, of the economy, the United States of America last year were our most important trading partners—partner. Both for Germany and the European Union, the European Union and the United States of America are the big, important economic areas for us, which is why I've always come out strongly in favor of concluding a trade agreement with the United States of America.

We have made progress, quite a lot of progress. They cannot be stopped, those negotiations. But we'll keep what we have achieved so far, and I'm absolutely certain that one day we will come back to what we have achieved and build on it, because that is my deep conviction. Globalization—and I think we share this conviction—is that globalization needs to be shaped politically. It needs to be given a human face. But we cannot allow to fall back into preglobalization times. So this conclusion of trade agreements that go beyond the scope of mere trade—tariff agreements, customs agreements, are most important, and I'm very pleased that we were able to bring this to fruition between Canada and the EU.

We made great progress, particularly if we look at one of the great global issues, namely, climate protection. Without the engagement of the current administration under the leadership of Barack Obama, this Paris Agreement would never have come about. There has been a change in the attitude in the United States towards that agreement, but there is also a better cooperation with China. So, last year, we

were able to conclude a Paris climate agreement, which will lead the way for the rest of the world, which is groundbreaking. And together with the sustainable development goals of the agenda 2030 for the whole world, this is indeed a sea change, I think, that we see here, and step by step, it will be implemented.

There's another point that I wanted to mention here, particularly, the engagement and commitment to Africa. For us Europeans, Africa as a neighboring continent is of prime importance. The development of African countries is in our very own vested interest. We, as Germans, but also we, as members of the European Union, will have to deal with this. It will be at the very top of our agenda.

There are a lot of areas where we cooperate: fight against ISIL, for example. Here, Germany was able to contribute to a certain extent, in certain areas. We'll continue to do so: for example, in supporting the Peshmerga, in air policing. But we also have to acknowledge that the United States of America bear most of the burden. They bear the brunt of this responsibility.

So I take your remarks very seriously, Barack, that the European Union as a whole, but also Germany, needs to recognize that this is our alliance, our common alliance, our transatlantic alliance, that we have to step up our engagement. Because, in the long run, we will not be allowed to accept this imbalance as regards the contributions we give to this alliance. And we have understood this message, and we have started to react.

We have worked very closely together, for example, in Afghanistan. We're continuing to do so. I'm very pleased that this military engagement—together with a political road map that we've developed—we were able to continue. We want to bring about a political solution there.

We work very closely together in—on the issue of annexation of Crimea and Russia's attempt to actually conquer Ukraine. And actually, they did so, conquered part of the territory. We tried to come to a peaceful settlement here on this.

So our interests are very much aligned. Our attempts of cooperation are very much aligned. We continue to build on what we've already achieved in these last months of the administration, and we will continue also with the new administration.

This is the end of an 8-year cooperation that was very close, indeed. From a German point of view, German-American and European-American relations are a pillar of our foreign policy, a foreign policy that is obviously guided by interests, but that is very much also committed to shared values. So we have a platform—democracy, freedom, respect of human rights—that we would like to see respected all over the world and also a peaceful world order. And we have shared those values; we continue to share those values. And obviously, we will continue to cooperate with the new administration.

But today I think a word of gratitude is at hand. Thank you very much for this very close, very intensive cooperation.

President Obama. Well, thank you so much. It is wonderful to be back in Berlin. This is my sixth visit to Germany. It will not be my last. I have somehow continued to miss Oktoberfest. [*Laughter*] So that's probably something that is better for me to do as a former President rather than as President. I'll have more fun.

It's also wonderful to be back with my great friend and ally, Chancellor Merkel. As I reflect back over the last 8 years, I could not ask for a steadier or a more reliable partner on the world stage, often through some very challenging times.

So I want to thank you for your friendship, for your leadership, and your commitment to our alliance. And I want to thank the German people for the incredible partnership that our countries have been able to establish all these years.

Last week marked the 27th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. The United States was proud to stand with the people of Germany as this nation and this continent reunited and rebuilt and reached for a better future. And it's a reminder that the commitment of the United States to Europe is enduring, and

it's rooted in the values we share, values that Angela just mentioned: our commitment to democracy, our commitment to rule of law, our commitment to the dignity of all people, in our own countries and around the world.

Our alliance with our NATO partners has been a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy for nearly 70 years—in good times and in bad and through Presidents of both parties—because the United States has a fundamental interest in Europe's stability and security. The commitment that Angela and I share to this guiding principle has formed the basis for our conversations this afternoon.

We discussed our efforts to keep our countries competitive and to create jobs and opportunity on both sides of the Atlantic. The negotiations on agreements like T–TIP have been challenging, and obviously, at a moment when there's concerns about globalization and the benefits that accrue to particular people, it is important that those negotiations and channels of communication remain. Because, ultimately, what we have shown over the last several decades is that markets and trade and commerce can create prosperity in all of our countries—that it's not a win-lose situation, but it can be a win-win situation.

And at a time when the European project is facing challenges, it's especially important to show the benefits of economic integration by continuing to invest in our people and working to reduce inequality, both within and across our countries.

I reiterated our hope that negotiations over the United Kingdom's exit from the EU will be conducted in a smooth and orderly and transparent fashion and preserve as closely as possible the economic and political and security relationships between the U.K. and EU. And I continue to believe what I said in Hannover: that the EU remains one of the world's great political and economic achievements and that those achievements should not be taken for granted, that they need to be nurtured and cultivated and protected and fought for.

Because the achievements that we've seen on this continent, in contrast to a divided Europe of the previous century, are ones that remind us of how important it is that we work together, and that we are willing to uphold principles that have resulted in unprecedented prosperity and security throughout Europe and around the world.

With the threat of climate change only becoming more urgent, Angela and I focused on the need for American and EU leadership to advance global cooperation. Both of our nations were proud to join the Paris climate agreement, which the world should work to implement quickly. Continued global leadership on climate—in addition to increasing private investment in clean energy—is going to be critical to meeting this growing threat.

Of course, we discussed our commitment to meeting shared security challenges, from countering cyber threats to ensuring that Iran continues to live up to the terms of the Iran nuclear deal. I commended Angela for her leadership, along with President Hollande, in working to resolve the conflict in Ukraine. We continued to stand with the people of Ukraine and for the basic principle that nations have a right to determine their own destiny. And we discussed the importance of maintaining sanctions until Russia fully complies with the Minsk agreement.

As part of the coalition against ISIL, we are putting that terrorist network under tremendous pressure. Here in Berlin, this week, coalition members are meeting to ensure we remain unified and focused on our mission to destroy ISIL. We are very grateful for the vital contributions Germany has made to this fight: training local forces in Iraq, sharing intelligence, providing reconnaissance aircraft, including the recent deployment of additional NATO AWACS. And as Iraqi forces continue the liberation of Mosul, I am pleased that NATO will be meeting the commitment we made in Warsaw to begin training additional forces in Iraq, which started this January.

We also continue to stand united with Germany and our NATO allies in our ongoing efforts to build peace and stability in Afghanistan.

On Syria, it's clear that the indiscriminate attacks on civilians by the Asad regime and

Russia will only worsen the humanitarian catastrophe and that a negotiated end to the conflict is the only way to achieve lasting peace in Syria. Angela and I also agreed the need for a comprehensive and humane response to the devastating humanitarian crisis in Syria and for the influx of migrants and refugees from around the world.

We need to build on the progress achieved at the U.N. Refugee Summit, which yielded new commitments from some 50 nations and organizations. The United States is doing our part by increasing the number of refugees we resettle. And I want again to commend Angela and, more importantly, the German people for the extraordinary leadership and compassion that you have shown in the face of what I know is a very difficult challenge. You are not alone in trying to deal with this challenge. This is not an issue that any one country should bear, but is in need of an international response. And I not only intend to make sure that we have put in place more robust support from the United States, but I'm hoping that that continues beyond my administration.

On this final visit, I am reminded of the visit I made here before I became President. It was 8 years ago. I had no gray hair. [*Laughter*] But I believe today what I said then: If you want a model for what is possible, if you want to see how to build a peaceful and prosperous and dynamic society, then look at Berlin, and look at Germany. Look at Chancellor Merkel. Her personal story helps to tell the story of incredible achievement that the German people have embarked on and, I think, is something that you should be very proud of.

It is not inevitable that we make progress; it requires hard work. Sometimes, it may seem as if progress is stalled. But what the history of postwar Germany shows is that strength and determination and focus and adherence to the values that we care about will result in a better future for our children and our grandchildren.

And on behalf of the American people, I want to thank the German people, I want to thank Chancellor Merkel, for your deep friendship and your steadfast partnership. So *vielen dank.*

[*At this point, the moderator spoke briefly in German, and no translation was provided.*]

White House Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest. Yes. Jeff Mason from Reuters.

Chancellor Angela Merkel/Russia-U.S. Relations/President-Elect Donald J. Trump/Cybersecurity

Q. Thank you very much. Mr. President, you and the President-elect have very different views on Russia. After your meeting with him last week, can you assure Chancellor Merkel that a Trump administration would also support strong sanctions against Moscow? Similarly, what have you told President Putin about Russia's influence on the U.S. election? And how would you advise European countries to deal with the same threat? And lastly, if I may, would you like to see your friend, Chancellor Merkel, run for reelection next year? [*Laughter*]

Frau Merkel, eine Frage auf Deutsch——

President Obama. Uh-oh. Pulling out your German, showing off. [*Laughter*]

[*The reporter continued in German, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter as follows.*]

Q. Has the American President calmed you in the sense that, on the policy of his successor on climate change and Russia, he has allayed your fears? And how—are you concerned that the common European policy towards Russia will collapse? And after the election of Mr. Trump, would you—as a sign of civility, wouldn't you actually have to declare that you are going to be a candidate again?

President Obama. Well, I try to make it a rule not to meddle in other people's politics. All I can say is that Chancellor Merkel has been an outstanding partner. And Chancellor Merkel is perhaps the only leader left among our closest allies that was there when I arrived, so in some ways, we are now the veterans of many challenges over the last 8 years. And although we have not always been in sync on every issue, in terms of our core values, in terms of her integrity, her truthfulness, her thoughtfulness, her

doing her homework, knowing her facts, her commitment to looking out for the interests of the German people first, but recognizing that part of good leadership on behalf of the nation requires engaging the world as a whole and participating effectively in multilateral institutions, I think she's been outstanding.

So it's up to her whether she wants to stand again, and then ultimately, it will be up to the German people to decide what the future holds. If I were here and I were German and I had a vote, I might support her. [*Laughter*] But it's—I don't know whether that hurts or helps. [*Laughter*]

With respect to Russia, my principal approach to Russia has been constant since I first came into office. Russia is an important country. It is a military superpower. It has influence in the region, and it has influence around the world. And in order for us to solve many big problems around the world, it is in our interest to work with Russia and obtain their cooperation.

I think we should all hope for a Russia that is successful, where its people are employed and the economy is growing and they are having good relationships with their neighbors and participating constructively on big issues like climate change.

So I've sought a constructive relationship with Russia, but what I have also been is realistic in recognizing that there are some significant differences in how Russia views the world and how we view the world.

The values that we talked about—the values of democracy and free speech and international norms and rule of law, respecting the ability of other countries to determine their own destiny and preserve their sovereignty and territorial integrity—those things are not something that we can set aside.

And so, in—on issues like Ukraine, on issues like Syria, we've had very significant differences. And my hope is that the President-elect coming in takes a similarly constructive approach, finding areas where we can cooperate with Russia where our values and interests align, but that the President-elect also is willing to stand up to Russia where they are deviating from our values and international norms.

And I don't expect that the President-elect will follow exactly our blueprint or our approach, but my hope is, is that he does not simply take a realpolitik approach and suggest that if we just cut some deals with Russia, even if it hurts people or even if it violates international norms or even if it leaves smaller countries vulnerable or creates long-term problems in regions like Syria—that we just do whatever is convenient at the time. And that will be something that I think we'll learn more about as the President-elect puts his team together.

I am encouraged by the President-elect's insistence that NATO is a commitment that does not change. And his full commitment to NATO as the foundation for our international security, I think, is very important.

And finally, in terms of my conversations with President Putin, these are conversations that took place before the election. As I indicated, there has been very clear proof that they have engaged in cyber attacks. This isn't new. It's not unique to Russia. There are a number of states where we've seen low-level cyber attacks and industrial espionage and other behavior that we think should be out of bounds. And I delivered a clear and forceful message that, although we recognize Russia's intelligence gathering will sometimes take place even if we don't like it, there's a difference between that and them either meddling with elections or going after private organizations or commercial entities, and that we're monitoring it carefully and we will respond appropriately if and when we see this happening.

I do think that this whole area of cyber is something that, at an international level, we have to work on and develop frameworks and international norms so that we don't see a cyber arms race. A lot of countries have advanced capabilities, and given the vulnerabilities of our infrastructure and our economies to digital platforms, we have to be careful in making sure that this doesn't become a lawless, low-level battlefield.

And we've started trying to put together some principles that were adopted in the G–20,

the G–7, and at the U.N. levels, but a lot more work remains to be done on that front.

Chancellor Merkel. Well, allow me if I may to underline, first of all, that I'm very much impressed that, in spite of a very tough election campaign, this transition period in the United States of America, because it is—it follows democratic principles, is working smoothly. Because this is all about the American people, it's about the destiny of the American people, the outgoing administration is sharing its knowledge, its expertise with the incoming administration. And this to us is a sign of encouragement to continue the good cooperation that we have built between the United States of America and the Federal Republic of Germany. And that is in our mutual interest.

So we will continue this. I will continue this with—I approach this with an open mind, and I'll do it on the basis of a deep conviction with President-elect Donald Trump.

Secondly, on Russia, I can only repeat what the President said previously. This is all about respecting certain principles. And I'm saying this from a European vantage point, from a European—from a German vantage point, sorry. The fact that for over 70 years, we have been able to enjoy peace, to live in peace very much depends on territorial integrity and sovereignty of each and every European country being respected. In view of the European history, the reverse would be the start of a very bitter road down a slippery slope, and we have to nip this in the bud. We have to stand up resolutely against any such attempts.

But we are pinning our hopes on political efforts. This is why we launched the Normandy process, in close coordination with the United States of America. And particularly from a German perspective—from the European perspective—I can only say again, Russia is our neighbor. And just look at Poland—the sort of European perspective this has. So we have an interest in seeing this relationship be a good one. We have a lot of historical ties, of course, a history that we share. But this mustn't keep us from, wherever we feel there are very grave differences of opinion, to raise them with them, but again, with political means and always trying to work for political settlements.

And this is what I'm going to continue to work on with all my heart. So, on the question whether I will put up a candidacy, I will do this at the appropriate time, and this is not today.

President Obama's Governing Philosophy/Effects of Globalization, Technological Innovation, and Social Change/Nationalism

Q. German Press Agency, Kristina Dunst. Mr. President, your country is divided. You, as first Black President—as first African American President, who did so many things so differently, who raised so much hope all over the world, do you think that you have, perhaps in a way, too—put too much of a strain, maybe too much of demands on the Americans? And to what extent do you think your successor may well be a threat to the rest of the world, to the security? Because there are, after all, nuclear weapons here in Germany to which he has access now.

Will you want to be now, Madam Chancellor, see to it under this—your administration try to make Europe and Germany less dependent on the United States? And are you afraid of this wave of populism hitting Germany, hitting Europe, as well?

And a personal question: President Obama paid tribute to you as an outstanding politician. You are somewhat more sober in—when you describe your partner. How difficult is it for you to take leave today of your partner?

President Obama. My guiding principle as President has been to try to do the right thing even when it's not politically convenient; to look at long term trends in our economy, in our society, in the international sphere, and, using my best judgment, shape policies that will serve the American people, keep them safe, keep our economy growing, put people back to work, and best ensure peace, cooperation, and stability around the world.

And based on current surveys of public opinion in the United States, it turns out that the majority of Americans think I've done a pretty good job, that we haven't, in fact, gone too fast, as you describe it.

But what is certainly true is that the American people—just like the German people, just like the British, and people around the world—are seeing extraordinarily rapid change. The world is shrinking. Economies have become much more integrated, and demographics are shifting. Because of the Internet and communications, the clash of cultures is much more direct. People feel, I think, less certain about their identity, less certain about economic security. They're looking for some means of control.

And what that means is, is that the politics in all of our countries is going to require us to manage technology and global integration and all these demographic shifts in a way that makes people feel more control, that gives them more confidence in their future, but does not resort to simplistic answers or divisions of race or tribe or the crude nationalism, which I think can be contrasted to the pride of patriotism that we all feel about our respective countries.

And I think that our politics everywhere are going to be going through this bumpy phase. But as long as we stay true to our democratic principles—as long as elections have integrity, as long as we respect freedom of speech, freedom of religion, as long as there are checks and balances in our governments so that the people have the ability to not just make judgments about how well government is serving them, but also change governments if it's—they're not serving them well—then I have confidence that over the long term, progress will continue.

And I think it's especially important for those of us who believe in a world where we're interdependent, that believes in mutual interests and mutual respect between nations, it's particularly important that we reach out to everybody in our countries—those who feel disaffected, those who feel left behind by globalization—and address their concerns in constructive ways, as opposed to more destructive ways.

And I think that can be done. But it's hard. It requires creativity. It requires effective communications. Part of what's changed in politics is social media and how people are receiving information. It's easier to make negative attacks and simplistic slogans than it is to communicate complex policies. But we'll figure it out.

So, ultimately, I remain optimistic about not just America's futures, but the direction that the world is going in. And part of what makes me most optimistic is, if you look at the attitudes of young people. Across the board, young people are much more comfortable with respecting differences. They are much more comfortable with diversity. They are much less likely to express attitudes that divide us between "us" and "them." They see themselves as part of a global economy that they can navigate successfully and are showing enormous creativity and entrepreneurship and working with each other across borders.

So that's where the future is. But we have to create that bridge to the future. And that means making sure we're paying attention to the wages of workers in countries and making sure that we're investing in their education and their skills, that we are growing the economy in smart ways and rebuilding our infrastructure and investing in science and development, and that we stay true to those values that helped to get us here. And if we do that, I think we're going to be fine.

Chancellor Merkel. Well, on the issue, first, of independence of Germany, after the time of National Socialism, Germany has been given an enormous amount of help, particularly and also from the United States of America. The fact that we were able to enjoy European—sorry, German unification is due, first and foremost, to the help of the United States of America. And ever since Germany was able to regain its unity, it is in an even stronger position to give its contribution to upholding this order to which we feel committed and for which particularly people in the German Democratic Republic stood out there in the streets to keep this up, to maintain this order, particularly also in our country.

Now, we're trying to do more than it used to be 26 years ago. And there are a number of other areas where we have to also make a stronger contribution. We will all have to

make—do more in development cooperation. It's important that these disparities in the living conditions cannot be allowed in this digital period to be too marked. Each and every one must be given an opportunity to participate, which is why Germany's fate, in many ways, depends on the firmness of its alliance with NATO, with the European Union. We cannot stand alone with 80 million people. In this world of today, you cannot, when you just stand on your own, achieve much, even though you may be economically strong. So alliances are part of our destiny as a nation, part of our future as a nation. And this is what guides me in my policy, what guides my government as a whole.

Secondly, this wave of populism that seems to engulf us, well, look at—and it seems, in your words, to come from the United States. Look at the European Parliament. We—there are a lot of people who are looking for simplistic solutions, for—who are sort of preaching policies of, well, very unfriendly policies. We have them here in Europe too. We have them here in Germany too.

And to take up where the President left off, digitization is, in a way, a disruptive force, a disruptive technological force that brings about deep-seated change, transformation of a society. Look at the history of the printing press, when this was invented, what sort of consequences this had, or industrialization, what sort of consequences that had. Very often, it led to enormous transformational processes within individual societies, and it took a while until societies learned how to find the right kind of policies to contain this and to manage and steer this. And I think we live in a period of profound transformation, very similar to when we had a transition from agricultural societies to industrial societies.

Now, when we, for example, see shifts of huge production lines from certain areas to other countries, people tend to ask the question, where's my place in this modern world? We have this here, this tendency in our country. We have it in other countries. Trying to keep a society together, trying to keep the older and the younger people together, trying to keep those who live in rural areas together with those who live in cities is one of the most important and most noble tasks of politicians these days—trying to see to it that each and every one can find his or her place.

But those that are—belong purportedly to certain groups say, we are the people, and not the others—that is something that we cannot allow to happen. That is something that I think, at the time in the GDR—at the time when we had this in the GDR, when the people stood in the street and said, we are the people—that was something that filled me with great joy. But the fact that these people have hijacked it certain is not something that fills me with great joy. We have to find new ways of addressing people, new ways of getting into contact with people. But I'm optimistic that we'll be able to do so.

Now, taking leave from my partner and friend, well, yes, it is hard. If you've worked together with somebody very well, leave-taking is very difficult. But we are all politicians. We all know that democracy lives off change. So, in the United States of America, the Constitution has very clear stipulations on this. It's a tough rule: Eight years, and that's it. Out goes the President, and a new one comes in. So, if it's in the German interest to have good transatlantic relations, well, the task is also to look ahead. But our personal—we have freedom of movement in the whole of Germany, so if we want to see each other, well, I'm game. So we're not completely out of this world, as we would say.

Press Secretary Earnest. The next question will come from Margaret Brennan of CBS News.

Political Protest/U.S. Presidential Election/Democracy/Germany-U.S. Relations

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President. You've spoken a great deal about what you've characterized as kind of a crude form of nationalism, perhaps, on the rise. I'm wondering if you would advise some of those protesters at home to stop demonstrating against some of the charged rhetoric that has been used by Donald Trump. And I'm wondering, as well, if you've advised your successor to be extra

mindful of what you see as some very worrisome trends, particularly when it comes to making his own potentially powerful staff picks.

Lastly, sir, in these final weeks of your Presidency, do you believe you have any leverage to stop Bashar al-Asad and Vladimir Putin from continuing to bomb Aleppo?

Chancellor Merkel, I'd like to ask you, Bashar al-Asad has described Donald Trump as a natural ally. Your own Foreign Minister has described Donald Trump as a preacher of hate. I'm wondering, would you tell Americans that they now have a perception problem?

President Obama. One of the great things about our democracy is, it expresses itself in all sorts of ways, and that includes people protesting. I've been the subject of protests during the course of my 8 years, and I suspect that there's not a President in our history that, at some point, hasn't been subject to these protests. So I would not advise people who feel strongly or are concerned about some of the issues that have been raised during the course of the campaign—I wouldn't advise them to be silent.

What I would advise—what I advised before the election and what I will continue to advise after the election—is that elections matter, voting matters, organizing matters, being informed on the issues matter. And what I consistently say to young people—I say it in the United States, but I'll say it here in Germany and across Europe—do not take for granted our systems of government and our way of life.

I think there is a tendency—because we have lived in an era that has been largely stable and peaceful, at least in advanced countries, where living standards have generally gone up—there is a tendency, I think, to assume that that's always the case. And it's not. Democracy is hard work.

In the United States, if 43 percent of eligible voters do not vote, then democracy is weakened. If we are not serious about facts and what's true and what's not—and particularly in an age of social media where so many people are getting their information in soundbites and snippets off their phones—if we can't discriminate between serious arguments and propaganda, then we have problems. If people, whether they are conservative or liberal, left or right, are unwilling to compromise and engage in the democratic process and are taking absolutist views and demonizing opponents, then democracy will break down.

And so I think my most important advice is to understand what are the foundations of a healthy democracy, and how we have to engage in citizenship continuously, not just when something upsets us, not just when there's an election, or when an issue pops up for a few weeks.

It's hard work. And the good news is, I think there are a lot of young people, certainly, who were involved in my campaigns and I think continue to be involved in work, not just politically but through nonprofits and other organizations, that can carry this hard work of democracy forward.

But I do think sometimes there's complacency. Here in Europe, I think that there are a lot of young people who forget the issues that were at stake during the cold war, who forget what it meant to have a wall. And I'll be honest, there have been times when I listened to the rhetoric in Europe where an easy equivalence somehow between the United States and Russia and between how our governments operate versus other governments operate—where those distinctions aren't made.

I've said many times around the world that, like any government, like any country, like any set of human institutions, we have our flaws; we've operated imperfectly. There are times when we've made mistakes. There are times where I've made mistakes or our administration hasn't always aligned ourselves with the values that we need to align ourselves with. It's a work of constant improvement.

But I can say to the German people that the United States has been good for Germany, has looked out for Germany, has provided security for Germany, has helped to rebuild Germany and unify Germany. And I can say, across Europe, that many principles that have been taken for granted here around free speech and around civil liberties and an independent judiciary and fighting corruption, those are princi-

ples that, not perfectly, but generally, we have tried to apply not just in our own country, but also with respect to our foreign policy.

And that should be remembered. Because at an age where there's so much active misinformation—and it's packaged very well, and it looks the same when you see it on a Facebook page or you turn on your television—where some overzealousness on the part of a U.S. official is equated with constant and severe repression elsewhere, if everything seems to be the same and no distinctions are made, then we won't know what to protect. We won't know what to fight for. And you—we can lose so much of what we've gained in terms of the kind of democratic freedoms and market-based economies and prosperity that we've come to take for granted.

That was a long answer, wasn't it? I don't remember if I—there was a second part to it. I was—I got all caught up in that one [*Laughter*].

President-Elect Donald J. Trump/Syria

Q. I asked you if you advised the President-elect on his—[*inaudible*]—to be mindful of his—[*inaudible*].

President Obama. Yes, I did. I did. He ran a extraordinarily unconventional campaign, and it resulted in the biggest political upset in perhaps modern political history—American history. And that means that he now has to transition to governance. And I—what I said to him was that what may work in generating enthusiasm or passion during elections may be different than what will work in terms of unifying the country and gaining the trust even of those who didn't support him.

And he's indicated his willingness to—his understanding of that. But you're absolutely right that that has to reflect itself not only in the things he says, but also how he fills out his administration. And my hope is, is that that's something that he is thinking about, because not only is the President of the United States somebody that the entire country looks to for direction, but sets the agenda internationally in a lot of ways.

Q. And Syria?

President Obama. With respect to Syria, we are going to continue to work, as we have over the last 5, 6 years, to push towards a political transition and settlement.

It would be naive of me to suggest that with Russia committed militarily as it is to supporting what, in many cases, are barbarous tactics by the Asad regime to crush the opposition, the sort of indiscriminate bombing that we've been seeing not just in Aleppo, but in many parts of the country over the last several years—it would be naive of me to suggest that there's going to be a sudden, 180-degree turn in policy by either Asad or Russia or Iran at this point. But we are going to continue to make the argument. We are going to continue to try to find humanitarian steps that can reach the people there. We're going to continue to try to obtain cessations of hostilities that lessen the human tragedy and the migration that's taking place.

But ultimately, the way this is going to be resolved is going to have to be a recognition by Russia and a willingness to pressure Asad that a lasting, durable peace with a functioning country requires the consent of people. You cannot purchase people's consent through killing them. They haven't made that transition yet, but we're going to keep on trying.

Chancellor Merkel. I think I can speak for the whole of the federal Government when I say that we are no longer in a election mode in the United States, we're in postelection mode. There is an interest of the Federal Republic of Germany to cooperate well with the United States of America. This goes for each and every President on the basis of shared values, and I believe that these are, indeed, shared values and should be shared values.

So, as to my position on President Asad, Asad as President has actively tried to kill his own people. He has bombed them with barrel bombs in a most terrible way. He has brought untold suffering over his people, if you look at Aleppo and other places. When you talk to the many Syrian refugees who have fled here to Germany, they will be able to tell you their own personal story, and the majority of them—the great majority of them—fled from Asad,

and most of them not even fled the IS. So I don't see him as an ally.

President-Elect Donald J. Trump/Germany-U.S. Relations

Q. Thank you very much. Mr. President, you describe your hopes rather more in great historical terms. Let me break this down to months and years. The fact that Stephen Bannon was made as chief strategist, meeting Mr. Farage, and the fact that prominent Republican representatives did not decide to join this transition team—what makes you confident, against the background of this, that President Trump can be a reliable partner to the world and to Europe and Germany?

Now, Madam Chancellor, if you hear those words of praise of the President with regard to you—this, what he said, can this not sort of demand too much from you and from Germany? Because too much is demanded, too much is expected from you—too great are the expectations, you can't meet them?

President Obama. I'm always optimistic. [*Laughter*] There are times where I was in the Oval Office and people would come to me with all kinds of political problems and policy problems and international problems, and my team would be getting discouraged and depressed, and I would say to them, I have to be optimistic, because the odds of somebody named Barack Obama being President of the United States were very low, and the fact that, in my lifetime, I have seen such enormous, positive change in the United States and around the world tells me that, although history does not travel in a straight line, it moves in the direction of justice and freedom and a better life for people. But we have to fight for it. We have to work for it.

What makes me cautiously optimistic about my successor and the shift from campaign mode to governance is, there is something about the solemn responsibilities of that office, the extraordinary demands that are placed on the United States—not just by its own people, but by people around the world—that forces you to focus, that demands seriousness. And if you're not serious about the job, then you probably won't be there very long, because it will expose problems.

Even when you're doing a good job, even when you are attentive, there are so many things that come across your desk that people are going to question you, and there—you're going to have opponents, and you're going to have critics. And you figure that out pretty fast when you're sitting there. And I think the President-elect is going to see fairly quickly that the demands and responsibilities of a U.S. President are not ones that you can treat casually and that in a big, complex, diverse country, the only way that you can be successful is by listening and reaching out and working with a wide variety of people.

And so it is my hope that that is what will happen. And I'm going to do everything I can over the next 2 months to help assure that that happens.

It is absolutely true that Chancellor Merkel is going to have significant responsibilities, has had extraordinary burdens that she's had to carry. If she chooses to continue, you're right, she will have big burdens. I wish I could be there to lighten her load somewhat, but she's tough. [*Laughter*] And I have—I know what it means to carry burdens because the fact of the matter is, is that if there are problems around the world, the first question people ask is, why isn't Washington doing something about it?

This is why it's so important not to discount or take for granted the importance of the transatlantic alliance. And this is probably the best place for me to end.

In international fora—in G–20s, in G–7s, in the United Nations—the United States and Germany are not always perfectly aligned. America and Europe are not always perfectly aligned. But the voice that speaks out on behalf of some dissident who is jailed halfway around the world, the voice who is expressing concern about some child in an African village who doesn't have clean drinking water or is subject to some terrible disease, the voice that insists on rules and norms governing international affairs, the voice that helps to steer the world away from war wherever possible—that's our voice more often than not.

And we're not always successful. But if that voice is absent, or if that voice is divided, we will be living in a meaner, harsher, more troubled world. And we have to remember that. And whoever is the U.S. President and whoever is the Chancellor of Germany and whoever is the leader of other European nations and other democracies around the world, they need to recognize that.

There are going to be forces that argue for cynicism, for looking the other way with somebody else's problems, that are not going to champion people who are vulnerable, because sometimes that's politically convenient. And if we don't have a strong transatlantic alliance that's standing up for those things, we will be giving to our children a worse world. We will go backwards instead of forwards.

So, whoever the U.S. President is, whoever the Chancellor of Germany is, we need to remember that. And our citizenry who decide who our Presidents and Chancellors are need to remember that.

Chancellor Merkel. Well, first, it is, after all, a very good thing if, after 8 years of cooperation, the President of the United States says that this is a cooperation based on friendship, that we cooperated well. I feel that this is a very good, a very positive message and, indeed, an encouragement for me.

Now, secondly, I, fortunately, know very many people—and there are many, many more that I don't know—and many politicians who stand up for the same values of democracy, of liberal societies, of open societies, of respect for the dignity of man. And I feel that we are in a community of people here who stand up for these values, who try to maintain them, and wherever they are not yet respected, stand up for people's rights to enjoy them as well.

And this is worth every effort. And—but I think we're gratified to know that there are many, many people who are—feel committed to this goal.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 5:33 p.m. at the German Chancellery. In his remarks, the President referred to President François Hollande of France. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization, also known as IS. Reporters referred to Minister of Foreign Affairs Frank-Walter Steinmeier of Germany; Stephen K. Bannon, chief executive officer of President-elect Trump's election campaign, in his capacity as chief strategist and counselor to the incoming Trump administration; and Nigel P. Farage, Member of the European Parliament and leader of the United Kingdom Independence Party. Chancellor Merkel, the moderator, and some reporters spoke in German, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session at a Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative Town Hall Meeting in Lima, Peru
November 19, 2016

The President. Hola, Peru! Asu! Muchas gracias. Thank you so much. Thank you. Everybody, please have a seat. [*Laughter*] Thank you, Cyntia, for your kind words and your great work here in Peru in bringing people together across generations to meet challenges. Please give Cyntia a big round of applause for the great introduction.

So it is wonderful to be here in Peru. I want to thank everybody at Catholic University of Peru for hosting us. I want to thank the Government and the people of this beautiful country for your hospitality.

Audience member. I love you!

The President. I love you too. I do.

So, while I'm here, I'm hoping to enjoy some good food: some pollo a la brasa, maybe a pisco sour. But I will not be attempting the Marinera, because I usually leave the dancing to my wife Michelle. [*Laughter*] She's a better dancer than me.

But I want to thank all of you for being here, our Young Leaders of America, both live and

online, representing every country in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Now, this is my final stop on my final trip abroad as President of the United States. And I've had the usual meetings with world leaders, and we've done important business. But whenever I travel, one of the things I've been trying to do for the last 8 years is to meet with young people. First of all, young people are more fun than old people. [*Laughter*] Second, because today, more than half of the world's population is 30 or younger. And that means your generation will determine the course of our future, as individual nations and as a global community. Now, the good news is, because I've had a chance to meet so many young people around the world, it makes me very optimistic to know that you are going to be in charge. And that's why I wanted my last public event abroad to be with you.

I often say to young people in my own country: If you had to be born at any time in human history, it would be right now. If you think about all the progress that's been made, not just in your lifetimes, but even in the last few years, fewer people than ever around the world live in extreme poverty. Scientific breakthroughs are paving the way for cures to new diseases. More children are going to school—more girls in particular are going to school—than ever before. People across the world are securing their human rights. And technology has reshaped the world, as you can tell, because everybody has their phones. [*Laughter*] At a time when Earth is now populated by more cell phones than people—[*laughter*]—you have the power to connect with each other across borders, across nations. You have the tools in your hand to solve problems that we couldn't even imagine when I was your age.

Now, even as we make all these important strides in advancing the rights of more people, even as technology brings us closer together, this unprecedented change also brings challenges. We see it in the widening gap between rich and poor around the world. We see it in the forces of extremism and division that too often tear communities apart. So the question for all of us is, how can we make sure that in this rapidly changing world, nobody is left behind and that all of us are stronger and more prosperous?

So, over the last 8 years as President, I've worked to strengthen our relationship with the Americas. We're more than just neighbors. We're linked by trade and culture and family and values. Our students study in each other's countries. Our businesses sell goods across borders. Our tourists travel back and forth. And we've moved beyond many of the old arguments to create a new vision for the future, one that your generation, which is liberated from old ways of thinking, can lead.

During my Presidency, the United States recommitted itself to the region, in partnership with your countries, based on mutual interests and mutual respect. We increased trade. We stood up for democracy and human rights, fought against corruption and organized crime. We've promoted clean energy. We've led the global fight against climate change. We opened a new relationship with Cuba.

I strongly believe that this work has to be done with governments, but it's even more important that it's done by people, because government is important, but it can't solve every problem. So we have to work together at a people-to-people level: teachers and doctors and students and entrepreneurs and religious leaders, all trying to find ways in which we can promote those values of dignity and humanity and respect that so often are threatened.

And that's why we developed this Young Leaders Initiative. Our goal is to find the most innovative young entrepreneurs, the most energetic civil society leaders like you, and help empower you with training and tools and connections so you can make a difference in your communities and your countries. This network already has 20,000 people. This fall, we welcomed the first class of 250 YLAI Fellows to the United States. [*Applause*] Yes! This is just a hundred of them. [*Laughter*] They're from every country across the Americas.

We want to help—[*applause*]—so we want to help this generation with grants, seed funding, skills training. Today I'm announcing the launch of the Latin American and Caribbean

Civil Society Innovation Initiative Hub, which is a way to virtually connect civil society organizations across the region so you can learn from each other, share your good work, support each other. We're investing $40 million in the talents and entrepreneurship of young people across the Caribbean to help start your own businesses and ventures. We're opening what we call the Global Innovation Exchange so that you can showcase your new business or enterprise to people around the world, and that way, you can connect and, hopefully, get resources that you otherwise didn't have.

And we're moving ahead with more educational partnerships, like the 100,000 Strong in the Americas. By the end of the decade, we want 100,000 U.S. students studying in the Americas and 100,000 students from the Americas studying in the United States. And today we're announcing a partnership between the U.S. Department of State, Sempra, and CAF, which is Latin America's development bank, to fund the first innovation fund competition exclusively between Peruvian and U.S. colleges and universities so students can come together to work on climate change and environmental science.

So we're focused on the hemisphere; we're focused on the region. But it's more than just North America, South America. You're now part of a global network of young leaders from Africa, Southeast Asia, Europe, and the Americas who are doing amazing work in their own communities. And while my time as U.S. President is coming to an end, this network is just beginning. It's never been more important. We need you to stay connected, work together, learn from each other, so we can build that next generation of leadership who can take on challenges like climate change and poverty, can help grow our economies, make sure that women get opportunity; make sure that every child, wherever they live, has a chance to build a good life.

And I'm going to just give you some examples of the amazing people that are involved in this process. We need leaders like Dr. Valéry Moise. As a young doctor in Haiti, Valéry saw firsthand how issues like acute malnutrition—hunger—affected the poorest children in her country—in his country. So he and a team of social workers and doctors started an organization called Diagnostik Group, which focuses on improving health care for abandoned children at the largest pediatric hospital in Haiti. His goal is for the group to become the standard for pediatric care and to expand so that he can reach even more children across Haiti. So thank you, Valéry, for the great work that you are doing. [*Applause*] Thank you.

We need leaders like Abbigale Loncke of Guyana. Abbigale, are you here? So, after struggling to find her own grandfather home care, Abbigale realized this is a problem for so many other families, so she started Community Health Care, a home care agency. She started out as a service to help families take care of their loved ones, but now has a social movement that also provides training and job opportunities for young women in the health care industry. So thank you, Abbigale, for the great work you're doing. And you already heard the great work that Cyntia is doing right here in Peru.

Across the world and across the Americas, young people are taking the lead. They're seeing problems, they're seeing injustice, and they are finding ways to take action.

And the main message I want you to know is that you have a partner in me and you have a partner in the United States Government. And we are going to work together. We expect the fellowships to continue, but I want you to know that I will also continue to be involved, even after I'm President, because I want to make sure that we continue to invest in your success. If you succeed, not only do your countries succeed, but the world succeeds. And I'm very excited to see all the great things you're going to do in the future.

So *muchas gracias.* Let's take some questions. Now we're going to start with some questions. I'm going to take off my jacket because it's a little hot. [*Laughter*] The—so I wasn't trying to get a cheer out of that, but—[*laughter*].

The—hey, I'm—can somebody just grab this? Thank you. Thank you, Mike. All right, so we're going to start with this question from this

gentleman right here. Please introduce yourself as you speak.

Hold on, the mike is not working. No, not yet. [*Laughter*] Do we have a second mike yet? Testing, one, two, three. Hold on, here's the technical expert. [*Laughter*] Here we go. Here's another one. Not yet? Uh-oh. Uh-oh. Here we go, we're going to try this one. [*Laughter*] One of these is going to work.

Q. Testing, testing

The President. Oh, there you go. Hey!

Democracy

Q. Finally. Good afternoon, Mr. President. My name is Luis Santiago. I'm from Caracas, Venezuela. I'm a YLAI Fellow. We're working on the first electronic health records platform for Latin America, and I was a proud member of this cohort of YLAI Fellows.

I'm here to read a question from our YLAI network. There were 200 questions posted on Facebook, but Carlos David Carrasco Muro from Venezuela asks: "In Venezuela, there's a debate about what matters most for stability, whether it's peace or democracy. How can we create a world where do not—we do not have to choose between them? Both are important for development."

Thank you very much.

The President. Well, it's a great question. And it's a timely question, because I think that after a decade in which we've seen more and more countries adopt democratic practices, you're now starting to see some of those gains reversed. You're seeing some countries that are going backwards rather than forwards in terms of freedom of the press, in terms of freedom of the Internet, in terms of respecting political opposition and civil society. And there are those who argue that democracy is incompatible with development because you need order, you need somebody from the top to tell people what to do in order to achieve.

And I would just suggest that you look at the evidence over the last 20, 30, 40 years. Those countries that pursue democracy, that pursue transparency, where their leaders are held accountable, those are the countries that are doing best. Those countries that are repressive, that don't respect democracy, that silence critics, they go backwards economically.

And it makes sense when you think about it, because in this time that we live in, development is based on knowledge and innovation and education and new thinking and sharing of ideas. It's not based on how much land you have, it's not based on natural resources. It's based on your people. And in a democracy, what we're able to do is, people, through the freedom they enjoy, are able to create, start businesses, start organizations, solve problems. And what's also true then is, they're able to hold the government accountable, so when the government doesn't deliver for its people—if it engages in corruption, if its policies only benefit a few rather than the many—people can react and respond, and over time, people get better policies from their governments.

And look at what's happened just along the coast here in Latin America. You look at Chile, Peru, Colombia, all of them are growing faster, all of them are doing better because of the new openness and democracy that exists in these countries. And what's true here is true around the world.

Now, the one thing I have to say though is, democracy is more than just elections. Democracy is also a free press. Democracy is also freedom of religion. Democracy is making sure that the rights of minorities are protected, not just the majority. Democracy is rule of law and an independent judiciary. So it's a matter of all these elements coming together.

But the main thing we've learned is that, in this knowledge-based society, you can maintain order for a while with repressive, nondemocratic governments, but it will rot from within. Over time, those governments fail and those economies fail, because when they make mistakes, they try to hide them instead of trying to solve them. When somebody has a legitimate criticism of a problem, it can be ignored because the politicians don't have to answer. And eventually, those societies end up doing much worse, oftentimes by increasing repression as people get more and more dissatisfied, and then society breaks down.

It's also true, by the way, that nondemocratic countries are much more likely to get into wars with other nondemocratic countries. Democracies tend to try to solve problems through diplomacy and dialogue. So not only is there not a contradiction between democracy and development, it is my belief that in order, in this new knowledge-based economy, for development to be successful, you need democracy.

I will say this one last thing, though. Democracy can be frustrating, because democracy means that you don't always get a hundred percent of what you want. Democracy means that sometimes you have to compromise. And it means that the outcomes of elections don't always turn out the way you would hope. [*Laughter*] And then you—we're going through that in the United States, and I'm doing everything I can to help facilitate a successful transition with the President-elect in the United States. But as long as we keep our democratic systems open, then the society has a chance to try something new, and then it can make a decision and correct problems that they see in the future, and progress will continue. Okay?

Good. All right. Let's see, right there. Yes, you. Yes. So let's get a microphone to you so we can hear you. And introduce yourself. By the way, I apologize, my Spanish is just okay. [*Laughter*] So we're doing this in English, but hopefully, I'm being clear. Go ahead.

President-Elect Donald J. Trump/North Atlantic Treaty Organization/Latin America-U.S. Relations/Trade

Q. Hi, Mr. President. I'm very glad to be here—that you are here in my country, in Peru.

The President. Yes.

Q. And for me, it's an honor to be here in this conference. Well, my question is, what do you think about that European Union having been come together to promote military integration in defense that—after the victory of Trump? And do you think that it is—we have a global paranoia created by the media, or is it real?

The President. Good. What's your name?

Q. Jocelyn Ramirez.

The President. Nice to meet you. The—are you a student here?

Q. I'm a student from UPC. [*Applause*]

The President. Fantastic. Okay. You have some classmates here. [*Laughter*]

The—well, the United States is such a big country that, after any election, people are uncertain. And I think it will be important for everybody around the world to not make immediate judgments, but give this new President-elect a chance to put their team together, to examine the issues, to determine what their policies will be. Because as I've always said, how you campaign isn't always the same as how you govern. Sometimes, when you're campaigning, you're trying to stir up passions. When you govern, you actually have reality in front of you, and you have to figure out, how do I make this work?

The alliance between the United States and Europe, through NATO, is very strong. And the President-elect Trump has already reaffirmed our commitment to NATO. We actually have been asking, under my administration, for Europe to carry more of the burden of defense spending than they've been doing, because the United States spends a lot more than some of our NATO partners. And they recognize and acknowledge, I think, the need for them to spend more time—more resources on that.

With respect to Latin America, I don't anticipate major changes in policy from the new administration. I think the work that we've done has been successful in establishing the strongest relationships between the United States and Latin America in modern history. The friendships that we've established with countries like Peru, the reopening of diplomatic relations with Cuba, the investments we're making in trade, in environmental policy, and so forth, all those things I expect to continue.

There are going to be tensions that arise, probably around trade more than anything else, because the President-elect campaigned on a—looking at every trade policy and potentially reversing some of those policies. But once they look at how it's working, I think they'll determine that it's actually good both

for the United States and our trading partners. There may need to be modifications. I've called for modifications in certain elements of our trading policy. When we established the U.S.-Peru Free Trade Agreement, one of the requirements was for Peru to strengthen its protection of labor rights, workers' rights. And we did that in part because, with all of our trading partners we don't want to be disadvantaged because we're dealing with labor that has no rights and so gets the lowest wages and can be exploited. But we did it also because that will help lift the wages and benefits and protections that workers here in Peru enjoy, because ultimately, that's good for everybody.

One of the things I really believe is that when you pay workers well, when ordinary people are getting a decent wage and decent benefits and decent protections, then they have more money in their pockets, and then they go out and they spend that money, which is good for business, and everybody is better off. So that's the kind of attitude that we want to try to promote in the years going forward. And my hope is, is that that policy will continue.

So my main message to you, though—and the message I delivered in Europe is—don't just assume the worst. Wait until the administration is in place, it's actually putting its policies together, and then you can make your judgments as to whether or not it's consistent with the international community's interest in living in peace and prosperity together. Okay?

Good. All right. Okay, so what I'm doing is, I'm going boy, girl, boy, girl—[*laughter*]—so that everybody gets a fair chance. Okay, this gentleman right here, in the purple shirt.

Nationalism/Globalization

Q. Thank you very much. First of all, I just want to say thank you for being such a great world leader over your tenure. I truly think that you've done your best in making the world a better place.

The President. I appreciate that.

Q. My name is Louby Georges.

The President. Thank you. Where you are from, Louby?

Q. I'm from the Bahamas.

The President. Hey.

Q. I'm the son of two Haitian immigrants living in the Bahamas. And I'm a human rights activist and also a radio talk show host. I filter my advocacy work through radio, because it's a great form of communication in getting everybody involved.

Nonetheless, you spoke about youth and us shaping the future and the direction and the world and what it's going to be in the very near future. But I'll give you a quick example of what I experience and then a question that can apply to all of us here as young people.

As a person being born to Haitian parents, immigrants, in the Bahamas, there is a certain perception on you not being a native. And governments have fed on that over time. And so the average individual that you would come into contact with, they would see you in a certain light. And so the opportunities to assist then, to help your country, then are diminished. For example, I'm trying to bridge the gap between Haitians and Bahamians in the Bahamas, but government officials and other individuals, they would have said, "Well, you—you're fighting for Haitians to take over the Bahamas." Well. it's not that. I just want Bahamians and Haitians to live in peace in the Bahamas.

And so, if you had the opportunity to have all of our Prime Ministers and Presidents in one room, and you had one word of advice that you could have given those leaders in regards to young people and especially millennials, what would you say to those leaders?

The President. Well, you know, I've had that opportunity a number of times. They don't always follow my advice. [*Laughter*]

But to your broader point, look, we live in a world that is smaller than ever before. Because of the Internet, because of modern travel, your generation gets ideas and culture and your politics from everywhere, right? You are listening to everything from Rolling Stones to Kendrick Lamar, to salsa, to reggaeton, to—[*laughter*]—right?

So what is true in music, what's true in food is also true in terms of politics and ideas. And the great thing about young people is, is that that's made your identities both national, but

also international. So people here are Peruvian, but you're also people who care about what happens around this continent and around the world. It means that you can be both proud of your Haitian heritage and live in the Bahamas and also be concerned about what happens in Africa or what is happening in Myanmar. That's a good thing.

Now, I'll be honest with you, older people sometimes are more threatened than younger people by this convergence because—you know, now that I've got gray hair, I see what happens as you get older—you get set in your ways, and you are afraid of things that are new. And oftentimes, politicians can feed into that sense that everything is changing so fast, let's go back to our old identities, identities of race or tribe or nationality.

And my main advice, not just to world leaders, but more importantly, to world citizens—to citizens around the world is, if you're defining yourself just by what you're not, if you're defining yourself just by the color of your skin or where you were born, then you are not fully appreciating what will give you a strong identity and meaning in your life and what will lead to prosperity and security for everyone. And that is the values and ideals that we should all promote: That we respect everybody, regardless of what they look like. That we give everybody opportunity no matter where they were born, whether they were born poor or they were born rich. That we have laws that everybody has to observe, not just laws for one set of people and then a different set of laws for other people.

Because the problem with that approach—a very narrow way of thinking about yourself—is that that means almost inevitably, you have to be in conflict with somebody else. Right? If the most important thing about you is that you are an American—if that's the one thing that defines you—then you may end up being threatened by people from other places, when in fact you may have a lot in common and you may miss opportunities.

Now, you—I'm a very proud American, and my job as President of the United States is to look out for American interests. But my argument to the American people has always been, the best way for us to look out for American interests is to also care about what's happening in our neighborhood. Because if their house is burning down, eventually, my house will burn down. The best way for my daughters to be secure as Americans is to make sure that people in El Salvador or Guatemala are also feeling some security, because if they're not, then eventually, that may spill over the borders to us.

And some of the challenges that we face today are ones that no single group can solve. You look at something like climate change: That knows no borders. If there is pollution in China, it affects you here in Peru. If we are going to make sure that the oceans don't rise so that suddenly all the streets around Lima are 2 feet underwater, then it's going to require everybody taking the kind of collective action that we talked about in the Paris Agreement.

So I think that there—we should all have the capacity, and governments should reflect this capacity, to be proud of our particular circumstance, be proud that you're Haitian, be proud that you're in the Bahamas, be proud that you're a young, Black man. Be proud of your particular identity, but also see what you have in common with people who don't look like you or don't come from the same place as you do. Because if we see what we have in common, then we're going to be able to work together, and that's going to be good for all of us. If all we see is differences, then we're automatically going to be in competition, and in order for me to do well, that means I have to put you down, which then makes you want to put me down, and everybody stays down here instead of everybody lifting each other up. It's the most important thing we can do.

All right, so it's a woman's turn. Okay, everybody is pointing at this young lady. All her friends were pointing at her, so she has something very important to say.

Education

Q. Welcome to Peru, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you.

Q. My name is Sofia, and my friends and I are students at Laboratoria. I know you have

met Mariana—[*inaudible*]. Do you remember about Laboratoria?

The President. I'm sorry, what? I'm sorry.

Q. Do remember about Laboratoria?

The President. Yes.

Q. With Mariana Costa?

The President. Yes, yes.

Q. Okay, I'm a student over there, me and my friends. We are so lucky to be studying over there to get a job in tech, but there are so many young people still without these type of opportunities. So what do you recommend to open more quality education or job opportunities for young people in Latin America?

The President. Well, the program you describe is doing great work, and there's a lot of good work all across Latin America. One of the goals is to make sure that not only are we providing a great education for people at the youngest ages—basic reading, arithmetic, all those things—but today, you also need to have some knowledge of technology. And what we're trying to do is to work with governments and NGOs to expand access to the Internet, to digital platforms. And what we also want to do then is to help design curriculum and programs through the Internet so that online learning is accessible in places where previously there might not be opportunities.

And we're seeing some of those investments here in Peru. That's part of the broader educational program that we have throughout Latin America. But we can still do more. And it's not just us, it's a public-private partnership also. So having Facebook participate and Microsoft and other—and Google and other big companies who have an interest in an educated population, because the more educated and more wired they are, the more, over time, customers are using their products and their platforms.

What we want to do is to make sure that everybody, even in the smallest village, has suddenly this library to the world and to the best educational opportunities, even if there's not a big university in that small town. And some of the learning that we can do, it doesn't have to be 4 years. Sometimes, a 6-week program could teach people coding in computers, and suddenly, right away, that person has a job, and then they can learn more and ultimately go and get a 4-year education. But oftentimes, what you need is just that first step.

And we're doing this in the United States, by the way. It's not just in Latin America. In the United States, one of the things that we're finding is that we need to expand computer science and literacy in the schools. We need to make sure, also, that we set up technical training systems where somebody who's unemployed in a city where there used to be a big factory, but now the factory is closed; or because of automation and robots, there are—fewer people are working there; those people who have lost their jobs, they may not be able to afford to just go to a 4-year university, give them 6 weeks, 8 weeks, 10 weeks of training. Get them in a job right now, and then over time, they can learn even more. All right?

So congratulations. You guys are doing good work. Good.

All right. Okay, so this is a team effort now. It's good to see this cooperation. Everybody is pointing at one person. [*Laughter*] All right, this gentleman right here, right in the front.

Immigration/U.S. Olympic Team/Cuba-U.S. Relations/European Migration Crisis

Q. Well, hello, Mr. President. I am a—I'm a student representative from this beautiful university with this gorgeous group of people. My name is Kai. And I'm going to give a little bit of context to my question. You see, the smartest man I know is my dad. My dad was born in Cuba. And when he was 7 years old, he went to the United States to get an opportunity. He lived all of his university life there, from community college to doctorate, and he managed to do a lot of things because the U.S.A. had an open-arm policy towards him.

Today, many immigrants can bring innovation to the U.S.A. because it has still this open-arms policy. But the administration that is set to go after you is allegedly saying that it will have a closed-door policy. In your opinion, what do you think that today the stand of the U.S.A. is for offshore innovators that want to leave their comfort zone to the U.S.A., to go to Harvard, MIT, Yale, to find and to strive? And

what would be the damages of the U.S.A. closing their doors to these young innovators?

The President. Good.

Q. And a final remark, I hope you have 2 amazing last months of Presidency. Thank you.

The President. Thank you. Thank you very much. Well, the—well first of all, I know that your father is very proud that you said he's the smartest man you know. I hope that Malia and Sasha have said—would say the same thing about their father. [*Laughter*] I don't know. [*Laughter*] But I'm sure that made him feel good.

Look, America is a nation of immigrants. Those of you who visited America, if you walk in an American city—not just New York or Los Angeles, but St. Louis or Indianapolis or Columbus, Ohio—if you walk down the street, you see people that look like they could be from anyplace. Because the fact is, is that except for the Native American populations, everybody in America came from someplace else. All of us are immigrants. And that's been our greatest strength, because we've been able to attract talent from everywhere.

I use this as an example: You notice that the United States did really well in the Olympics. Now, some of that is because we're a big country, we're a wealthy country, so we have all these training facilities, and we can do all kinds of—best equipment. And I—all that is true. But you know what, I mean China is a bigger country and spends a lot of money also. The big advantage that America has, if you look at our team—actually, two big advantages. First, we passed something called title IX many years ago that requires that women get the same opportunities in sports as men do. And that's why—one of the reasons the American teams did so well is, the women were amazing, and just because they've gotten opportunities. Right? Which teaches us something about the need to make sure that women and men, boys and girls, get the same opportunities. Because you do better when everybody has a chance, not just some.

But the second thing: You look at a U.S. Olympic team, and there are all kinds of different sorts of people of all different shapes and sizes. And part of it is because we draw from a bigger genetic pool than anybody, right? [*Laughter*] We have people who—these little gymnasts, they're like this big. [*Laughter*] Simone Biles came by the White House. She's—tiny little thing. Amazing athlete. Then we have Michael Phelps. He's 6′8″, and his shoulders are this big. And that's good for swimming. He couldn't do gymnastics, but he's a really good swimmer.

The point is, is that when you have all this talent from all these different places, then you actually, as a team, do better. And that's been the great gift of America.

Now, what we have to do not just in the United States, but in all countries, is to find a way to have a open, smart immigration policy, but it has to be orderly and lawful. And I think that part of what's happened in the United States is that even though the amount of illegal immigration that was—that is happening has actually gone down while I've been President, the perception is that it has just gone up. Partly, this is because it used to be that immigrants primarily stayed in Texas and Arizona and New Mexico, border countries, or in Florida. And now they're moving into parts of the country that aren't used to seeing immigrants, and it makes people concerned: Who are these people, and are they taking our jobs, and are they taking opportunity, and so forth?

So my argument has been that no country can have completely open borders, because if they did, then nationality and citizenship wouldn't mean anything. And obviously, if we had completely open borders, then you would have tens of millions of people who would suddenly be coming into the United States, which, by the way, wouldn't necessarily be good for the countries where they leave, because in some places like in Africa, you have doctors and nurses and scientists and engineers who all try to leave, and then you have a brain drain, and they're not developing their own countries.

So you have to have some rules, but my hope is, is that those rules are set up in a way that continues to invite talented young people to come in and contribute and to make a good

life for themselves. What we also, though, have to do is to invest in countries that are sending migrants so that they can develop themselves. So you mentioned Cuba, for example, where your father fled. He left in part because they didn't feel that there was enough opportunity there. Part of the reason I said let's reopen our diplomatic relations with Cuba is to see if you can start encouraging greater opportunity and freedom in Cuba. Because if you have people who have been able to leave Cuba and do really well in the United States, that means they have enough talent that they should be able to do really well by staying at home in Cuba.

There are enormously talented people here in Peru. I don't want all the young people in Peru to suddenly all go—[*applause*]—I don't want you to feel as if you have to go to New York in order to be successful. You should be able to be successful right here in Lima, right?

So this is true in the Americas, it's true in Europe, where, obviously, they've been flooded—and it's been very controversial—with migrants, some of them displaced from war in Syria, but some of them just coming for economic reasons from Africa. I just left meetings with European leaders, and we discussed the fact that if we're investing more in development in those African countries, and encouraging greater rule of law and less corruption and more opportunity in those countries, then people are less likely to want to come to Germany or Italy for their futures because they feel that they can make a future where they are.

But this is an example of what I was saying earlier. If we think only about—very narrow terms, about our borders and what's good for us, and ignore what's happening everywhere else, eventually, it will have an impact on us whether we like it or not. Because the world is just much smaller than it used to be. All right?

Okay. Let's see, you've got a—all right, young lady right there. Go ahead, in the black, yes. Yes, you.

Women's Rights and Gender Equality

Q. Oh, my God, thank you for this amazing opportunity. More than a question—well, I have to introduce myself first, sorry.

The President. Yes.

Q. I'm Jennifer Schell, and I'm from Venezuela. We already talked a little about my country, but I just want to thank you for giving us the women's opportunity to make us feel empowered.

I run a—I'm the CEO and founder of the Trabaja Mamá, a social initiative that promotes values for mothers around the world. I'm a mother. I have a daughter, and it's a little bit hard to become an entrepreneur. And I know that you have been supporting woman empowerment. You support a candidate who was a woman, Hillary. You are supported by your wife Michelle.

The President. Michelle is amazing.

Q. And what is—I'm sure, I'm sure. I'm sure of that.

So I know how you have been telling a lot of advices for young leaders. But I want an especial advice for female entrepreneurs, for those who have to strive a little bit more.

The President. Yes, yes.

Q. For those who are mothers who have to split their self and ask herself, should I be a mother or should I be a professional? I truly believe that we can be both at the same time, but I would like to hear it from you—an advice for all the womens, potential womens that are going to become a mother, will have our future generations.

And on behalf of all my YLAI Fellows, thank you for this amazing opportunity. And all the Fellows that are looking—there are more Fellows looking right now from their countries because they couldn't come to Peru, so thank you for all the Fellows that are watching right us now, and thank you for it.

The President. Okay. Well, it's a great question. The—I mean, Michelle probably would have more to say about this—[*laughter*]—because, you know, she's gone through it as a professional woman. But let me offer just a few observations.

First of all, the leaders and the men in every country need to understand that the countries that are most successful are going to be the countries that give opportunities to girls and

women and not just boys and men. Now that's—[*applause*].

And if you look at which countries are doing best—most advanced, grow the fastest—it's partly because you can't have half the population uneducated, not working, out of the house, not in leadership positions, and expect to be as good as a country where a hundred percent of the people are getting a good education and having opportunities and can do amazing things: starting a business or entering into politics or what have you.

So this is not just a problem for girls and women; men have to also recognize, this is good for you. And if you're a strong man, you shouldn't be threatened that women are doing well. You should be proud that women are doing well. And families where women have opportunity, that means they're going to be able to bring in more income, which means the family as a whole is going to do better.

And let's be honest, sometimes, you know, that whole machismo attitude sometimes makes it harder for women to succeed, and sometimes, that is coming even from those who love them. So, men, those of you who end up being fathers and you've got daughters, you've got to lift up your daughters. You can't—just telling them they're pretty is not enough. You've got to tell them they're smart, and you've got to tell them they're ambitious, and you have to give them opportunity.

So, once you have the whole country thinking in those terms, then you need to start having policies that can support women, and the most important thing, in addition to making sure that girls from an early age are getting a good education and that they're not being told, oh, you can just do certain things—like engineering, that's a man's job, or being scientist, that's a man's job or—no, no, girls can do everything. It can't be just, you know, be a teacher, or—which is a wonderful profession, but traditionally, women sometimes are just told there are a few things they can do—nurse, teacher—as opposed to anything. Right?

So that starts—once you've done that, then you have to recognize that the big conflict that women have in the professional world has to do with family and childrearing. And for biological reasons, women have more of a burden than men do. But it's not just biology, it's also sociology, all right? Men's attitudes is, well, yes, I don't have to do as much. And even in my marriage with Michelle, I like to think of myself as a modern, enlightened man, but I'll admit it, Michelle did more work than I did with Sasha and Malia.

So part of what societies can do, though, is they can help with, for example, having smart policies for childcare. One of the hardest things for professional women, particularly when their children are still small and not yet in school, is who's going to take care of my baby when I'm working, and how do I make sure that they're safe and that they're trusted. So making sure that governments have policies in place that help—now, having a mother-in-law who helps, that's also very useful. [*Laughter*] But not everybody has the option where they have family members who are close by. So that's an example of something that we have to really work on.

Then, we have to put pressure on institutions to treat women equally when it comes to getting loans to start a business. Up until just maybe 20 years ago, in some places—in the United States even—a husband had to sign a loan document with a bank, even though it was the wife's business, even if the woman was the one making the money, it was her idea, it was her investment, she was doing all the work. Because of these old stereotypes, you're having men cosign. That kind of mentality, that kind of discrimination still exists in a lot of institutions.

So we have to push back against those, we have to fight against those. Women who are successful, you have to then fight for the women who—the younger women who are coming behind you and make sure that you're changing some of these attitudes. If you are high up in a bank, then you've got to make sure that these policies are good for women. If you succeed in politics, then you have to help promote and encourage women who are coming behind you.

So the last thing, I guess, I would say would be—I know that Michelle says this to our daughters: You can be a wonderful mom and have a wonderful family and have a really successful career. You may have to kind of not try to do everything all at the same time exactly. You may have to time things out a little bit and have a husband who supports taking turns a little bit. So it may be that when the child is very young, you're not doing something that is as hard, because having a really young child is already really hard, and you have to sleep sometimes. But then, as the child gets older, maybe that's when you are doing something—maybe your husband is doing something that gives him more time to support that child. Right? So there's going to have to be finding the right balance throughout your life in order to be successful. All right?

But congratulations on the good work you're doing.

All right, I've got time for—so I only have time for two more questions. I'll call on that gentleman up there with the glasses, yes, in the blue shirt. No, no, right here. Wait, wait, wait—let him ask his question, and then I'll ask the last one. Go ahead.

The President's Advice to Young People

Q. Hello, Mr. President.

The President. Hello!

Q. It's really an honor to ask you this question. Well, my name is Alonso Cornejo. I'm from—I'm studying marketing at Universidad San Ignacio Loyola. And my question is about what advices will you give to Peruvian students that they are starting to think different, to making a change not just in Peru, just about [but]* all worldwide—make a change about worldwide. To what advices will you give them? Right now we live in a world that maybe the bad is good, and the good is bad. So what advices will you give them to chase their dreams, make a country better—not Peru, just worldwide? That will be my question. Thank you.

The President. Well, look, the—you're already doing so well. I don't know that I can give you the perfect advice. But I'll tell you what I tell my young people who work in the White House and who I meet in the United States, because I think it's—what's true in the United States is true for you as well.

We live at a time where you're always seeing bad news. All right? Everybody is—bad news gets a lot of attention. But the truth is that, in so many ways, the world is better now than it was 20 years ago or 40 years ago or 100 years ago. People are healthier today, they're wealthier today, they're better educated today. The world, if you look overall, is less violent than it was. Look at the 20th century; millions of people dying everywhere. Look at Latin America and the wars that were taking place everywhere across the continent. And so you actually are living in a time of relative peace and historic prosperity.

And I say that so that you should feel optimistic about the future. You shouldn't feel pessimistic. Yes, you're always seeing bad news, but the truth is, the world is in a place where it can solve its problems and be even better 20 years from now or 50 years from now. You have to start with that hope, that sense of optimism inside you, because if you don't feel that way, then you don't bother to try to have an impact, because you think, ah, every politician is corrupt, and all the governments are terrible, and people are greedy, and people are mean, and so I'm just going to look out for myself. And then nothing gets better. So you have to start knowing that things have gotten better and can continue to get better. That's number one.

Number two, I always tell young people to—and I don't know if this translates well in Spanish—but I say: Worry more about what you want to do and not what you want to be. Now, here is what I mean. I think a lot of people, they say to themselves, "I want to be rich," or they say to themselves, "I want to be powerful." Or they say, "I want to be the President," or "I want to be a CEO," so they—or, "I want

* White House correction.

to be a rap star" or whatever. So they say they have this idea, but the people I know who are most successful, usually, they're successful because they found something that they really care about, and they worked at it and became really good at it. And over time, because they were so good at what they did, they ended up being rich, or they ended up being powerful and influential. But in the meantime, they were constantly doing what they enjoyed doing and learning, and that's what made them successful.

So what I would say to all of you is, find something you care deeply about. If you care about poor children, then find a way right now that you can start helping some poor children. Don't wait, saying to yourself, oh, someday, when I'm President of Peru, I'm going to help poor children. [*Laughter*] No, go now and find an organization or create an organization that is helping poor kids learn or be exposed to new experiences. If you care about the environment, don't wait. In addition to your studies, you could start having an impact right now on trying to improve your local community or trying to be involved in some of the work that's being done around things like climate change.

The point is that once you decide what it is that you really care about, there are ways for you to now get involved and pursue that passion. And if you pursue that passion and you get good at it, you're not going to change the world overnight. Nobody does. I mean, I eventually, at the age of 45, became a Senator and then the President of the United States, but I worked for 25 years in poor communities and worked on issues. And hopefully, I was doing some good, even before I was famous or powerful, so that if I hadn't ended up being President I could still look back and say, I worked on the things that I cared about and I got something done that was important. And that, I think, is the most important advice that I have for you.

All right, last question. It's a woman's turn. So, all the men, you can put your—all the boys can put their hands down. It's a woman's turn.

Okay, go ahead, right there. Right there.

Importance of History

Q. Okay, first of all, my name is Melisa. I represent Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas. And besides, I'm a proud member of UPC—[*inaudible*]. And once again, I want to welcome you to this amazing country. And on behalf of this whole audience, I would like to thank you for this amazing opportunity.

Okay, so my question is the following. As it is well known, during your Presidency, you have stepped up and accepted mistakes you made yourself or maybe the team you're leading. And that's—I believe that shows how you reaffirm your belief in introspection and how you want to leave the past behind. What would your advice to us entrepreneurs, most of us, that would like to leave the mistakes—learn from them, step up, and leave what's the past in the past? Thank you, President.

The President. Well, you know, I don't—you shouldn't ignore the past. You should learn from it. And you should learn from history and learn from experience.

The truth is that I was—right before I came to Peru, I was in Europe, and I started my trip in Athens. And I went to the Parthenon, the birthplace of democracy. And you look at all these buildings from ancient Greece, and you try to imagine all the things that were happening in that time, and it seems very long ago. But the fact of the matter is, is that humanity keeps on making the same mistakes, and we oftentimes find ourselves dealing with the same problems and the same issues. So studying our past, studying our history, is very, very important.

But the main thing I tell you and I tell my own daughters is, you can't be trapped by the past. There's a difference between understanding your past. You need to know the history of Peru. If you live in the United States, you need to know how America came about, and that includes both the amazing, wonderful things, but also the bad things. I mean, you have to—if you want to understand America today, then you have to understand slavery, and you have to understand the history of immigration and how the debates we're having today about

immigration aren't that different from when the Irish or the Italians came and people were saying, we can't have any more Italians, and we can't have any more Irish. If you don't know that, then you aren't going to understand the patterns that we are having today.

But the point is, is that we have the power to make our own history. We don't have to repeat the same mistakes. We don't have to just be confined to what has happened before or what is going on today. We can think differently and imagine differently and do things differently.

The one thing that we should remember, though, is that even as we try to do things that are new, we should remember that change generally doesn't happen overnight. It happens over time. So I say that to young people because sometimes they get impatient. In the United States, sometimes, people say to me, oh, why don't—why haven't we eliminated racial discrimination in the United States? And I say, well, we've made a lot of progress since I was born. In terms of human history, if you think on the scale of hundreds of years or thousands of years—in 50 years, the changes that have taken place have been amazing.

So you have to understand that even though we can think differently, societies don't move immediately. It requires hard work, and you have to persuade people. And sometimes, you take two steps forward, and then you take one step back. And you shouldn't be discouraged when that happens, because history doesn't just move in a smooth, straight line.

The good news is that we have more access to information than we've ever had before. Young people are in a position to change the world faster than ever before. And I am confident that if you are respectful of people and you look for what you have in common with humanity, if you stay true to the values of kindness and respect and reason and trying to live together in peace, that the world will keep getting better. And I'll be looking forward to seeing all the amazing things that you do in the years to come.

Okay? Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:34 p.m. in the gymnasium of the Coliseo Polideportivo at the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru. In his remarks, he referred to Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative Fellow Cyntia Paytan Riveros; Mike White, Presidential detail leader, U.S. Secret Service; and Simone Biles, gymnast, and Michael F. Phelps II, swimmer, 2016 U.S. Olympic Team. He also referred to his mother-in-law Marian Robinson. Participants referred to Mariana Costa Checa, cofounder and executive director, Laboratoria; and 2016 Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Xi Jinping of China in Lima
November 19, 2016

President Obama. I am looking forward to the opportunity to once again meet with President Xi. Over the past 3½ years, we have met 9 times. And the frequency of our engagement has enabled us to advance cooperation on shared challenges and manage differences between our countries effectively.

We've collaborated on key global challenges. From supporting global growth to preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, to ending the Ebola epidemic in West Africa, we've demonstrated what's possible when our two countries work together.

In particular, the United States and China have played a pivotal role in pressing the world to act on climate change. When I was in Hangzhou, our nations formally joined the Paris Agreement. Now we face the work of making sure our economies transition to become more sustainable.

In terms of regional security, President Xi and I are united on our strong opposition to North Korea's provocations, and we will intensify our efforts to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula. In the South China Sea, the United States continues to urge all claimants to

lower tensions and peacefully resolve disputes.

I expect we'll also have a candid conversation on areas where we continue to differ, including the creation of a more level playing field for our businesses to compete, innovation policies, excess capacity, and human rights.

This will be my last meeting as President with President Xi, so I want to take this opportunity to note our work together to build a more durable and productive set of bilateral ties. I view the relationship between our two countries as the most consequential in the world. I continue to believe that a constructive U.S.-China relationship benefits our two peoples and benefits the entire globe. And the structure and framework of cooperation, the frequent meetings and consultations that we've established, I think, has been extremely productive.

So I want to thank President Xi and his delegation for their efforts in this regard.

President Xi. Well, it's my great pleasure to meet you, Mr. President, in Lima. This is our third meeting in 2016 and our ninth meeting over the past 3 years and more. This really shows the two sides' shared commitment to the China-U.S. relationship. And, Mr. President, I would like to commend you for the active efforts you've made to grow this relationship.

Since we met in Hangzhou in early September, the China-U.S. relationship has, generally speaking, continued to grow in a stable manner. There have been frequent exchanges at the top and other levels. We've made new progress in cooperation on the economy, mil-to-mil, law enforcement, judiciary, subnational exchanges, people-to-people contacts and so on. And the two sides have kept up close communication and coordination on climate change, the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue, and other important international, regional, and global issues.

We meet at a hinge moment in the China-U.S. relationship. I hope the two sides will work together to focus on cooperation, manage our differences and make sure there is a smooth transition in the relationship and that it will continue to grow going forward.

Both China and the United States are important member economies in APEC. China stands ready to have more coordination with the U.S. and to work alongside others to make sure the meeting in Peru is a success and to inject new momentum into regional economic cooperation and the growth of the Asia-Pacific economy.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:16 p.m. at the JW Marriott Hotel Lima. President Xi spoke in Chinese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Malcolm B. Turnbull of Australia in Lima, Peru
November 20, 2016

President Obama. It's a great pleasure to have the opportunity to have a final meeting with my friend and colleague, Prime Minister Turnbull, and his delegation. Australia, obviously, is one of our strongest friends and allies. It is a friendship based on shared values, on extraordinarily close people-to-people ties, on shared economic interests, and a shared worldview.

And this brief visit gave us an opportunity to exchange thoughts on how we move forward on a whole range of important issues. The Prime Minister had already reached out to President-elect Trump and his team. And I indicated to him my confidence that the U.S.-Australia alliance will remain as robust as ever, because it transcends party politics.

We had a chance to discuss the counter-ISIL campaign. Australia has been our most stalwart ally when it comes to troop deployments and the effort there. The progress that's being made in Iraq as Iraqi forces seek to

retake Mosul, the training of Iraqi troops, making sure that we are prepared for any humanitarian aftermath of that campaign—much of that success can be attributed to the enormous contributions that are made by the Australian Government. And we're grateful not only to the Government, but most importantly to the men and women in uniform who serve.

We also had an opportunity to discuss some of the regional issues around the Asia-Pacific that had been of great interest to my administration as we have rebalanced and focused on the Asia-Pacific region more than had been focused on in the past. And we are aligned in our views that upholding open markets, promoting high-standard trade agreements like TPP, ensuring rule of law and international norms on issues like maritime disputes serve not only the interests of Australia and the United States, but also serve the interests of the region and the world.

And as a consequence, it's not often where I have a meeting and I've got nothing to disagree with. [*Laughter*] Usually, there's something we can talk about to keep us busy. But there's a strong alignment of interests between the United States and Australia. And not only do I wish the Prime Minister luck as he moves forward, but I've assured him that we're going to do everything we can to have a strong handoff and continuity in the new administration so that we can continue to work together to promote prosperity for our people and security for our people.

So thank you so much, Malcolm.

Prime Minister Turnbull. Well, thank you very much, Mr. President. And it is a great moment, but a sad moment, to have our last meeting with you in your capacity as President of the United States. I want to thank you for the leadership you've shown to your country and the world over 8 years.

Our alliance has got stronger than ever, and that has been because it's based on those shared values, shared values made manifest by our commitment around the world to work together in freedom's cause, in the Middle East. And I thank you for the compliments you've paid our service men and women in the Middle East.

We're working together there to retake Mosul, to bring an end to Daesh and its so-called caliphate, and to fight terrorism around the world. We're standing up for the rule of law around the world. And those understanding that the foundation of the prosperity that the world has enjoyed, the rise—the lifting of billions of people out of poverty has been made possible by that foundation of a rules-based international order underpinned by the commitment of the United States over so many years and especially over the last years during your Presidency.

I want to thank you very much for your cooperation with us on so many issues: on humanitarian issues and resettlement issues in our own region. Thank you for that.

And on trade, we are quite of the same mind of the importance of open markets, the way trade and increasing the opportunities for businesses to grow and develop, whether it's in Warrnambool or Wyoming—[*laughter*]—it benefits across the world. And we've agreed—as we have with the other leaders here—the importance of making the case for open markets repeatedly and more persuasively now than ever.

I've been very impressed, Mr. President, by the way in which despite your party's disappointment with the election result in the United States, the way you've set out to reach out to the President-elect and, as we all do, wish him the best of success. We want America to succeed under the new President, just as it succeeded under your leadership. And your statesmanship and generosity sets a great example, which all of us admire.

So thank you very much for the great leadership you've shown, for the friendship you've shown. Australians and Americans are bound by shared values, as you've described. But above all, it's bound together by millions—literally millions—of people-to-people links and friendships and alliances with a large "A," between nations and many, many alliances between businesses and families across the years.

So our relationship will get stronger than ever, but it has been immeasurably strengthened under your leadership, and we thank you for it.

President Obama. Thank you, Malcolm. Thank you. You too. It means a lot.

Prime Minister Turnbull. Thank you.

President Obama. Good. Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:23 p.m. in the Ichima I room at the Lima Convention Centre. In his remarks, he referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization, also known as Daesh.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Justin P.J. Trudeau of Canada in Lima

November 20, 2016

President Obama. Well, it's a great pleasure to be able to spend a little bit of time with my good friend and the Prime Minister of one of our closest allies in the world, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and his team.

The friendship, the bonds, the links between Canada and the United States are obviously unparalleled. And it has been an extraordinary pleasure of mine over the last year and a half or so to be able to work directly with Justin on a whole host of issues.

First and foremost, we have enormous commercial relations. And our teams have been able to advance and build on a whole range of progress around how we both manage our borders, but facilitate trade flows and tourism and all the things that are the lifeblood of the relationship between our two countries. We're going to try to get as much of that work completed in the last 2 months of my Presidency.

Canada has been an outstanding partner in the fight against terrorism, not just in terms of intelligence gathering and information sharing, but also the incredibly important investments that they've made in the success of the counter-ISIL campaign and that they continue to make.

Justin's personal voice on issues of refugees and the humanitarian concerns that we share has been a really important component of the success of things like our leadership Summit on Refugees at the U.N.

And, on climate, we represent two of the largest oil producers and natural gas producers in the world. Those are vital industries to us. And we continue to appreciate the contributions they make to our economy and to job creation. On the other hand, we also recognize that we have a huge stake in dealing with climate change for future generations. And our ability to collaborate was an important component in us being able to achieve the Paris Agreement and now be able to follow through on some of those commitments.

So I have to say that there are few leaders around the world who I think combine vision and talent and values the way that Justin does. And I am very much looking forward to his continued leadership in the years to come. And I look forward to visiting Canada often as a private citizen and may stop in and check in with his beautiful family when I get the opportunity.

But the one thing, I think, that we emphasized is that through conservative governments, liberal governments, Democratic or Republican governments, the relationship between the United States and Canada is one of the most important constants in the world, and I have no doubt that that will continue.

So thank you, Justin.

Prime Minister Trudeau. Thank you, Barack.

[*At this point, Prime Minister Trudeau spoke in French, and no translation was provided. He then spoke in English as follows.*]

It's always such a tremendous pleasure to sit down with Barack to talk about not just the deep connections—economic, people-to-people, cultural, security ties—between Canada and the United States, but also the vision we share for engaging the world in positive ways

and promoting both opportunity and stability around the world.

We discussed, as we always do, a broad range of issues, including a number of issues—specific issues important to Canadians and Americans. And whether it was softwood lumber or the preclearance agreement on our borders, there is continued work being done on making sure that we're doing right by our citizens.

Obviously, I am going to miss having Barack around to work the Canada-U.S. relationship with. We share a tremendous amount of values and outlook on the future. But I know at the same time, as we've both said many times, the relationship between Canada and the United States is extraordinarily deep and important. And I look forward to welcoming the President-elect up to Canada, hopefully, soon after the Inauguration. I've certainly invited him to come up.

But as for Barack, I know that he is going to continue to be a valuable and important voice on the world stage as a private citizen and as someone who will continue to fight for his values and his belief in how we can work together for a better world. But I also know that he is looking forward to taking some time with his beautiful family, Michelle and the two girls, and I wish them all the very best in the coming years.

President Obama. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:59 p.m. in the Ichima II room at the Lima Convention Centre. In his remarks, he referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. In his remarks, Prime Minister Trudeau referred to President-elect Donald J. Trump.

The President's News Conference in Lima
November 20, 2016

The President. Good evening, everybody. Let me begin by thanking President Kuczynski and the wonderful people of Peru for hosting us and for their outstanding hospitality. Peru is one of the United States strongest partners in the Americas, from standing up for democracy to promoting jobs and growth, to fighting climate change. And this summit has been a success thanks to the great work of our Peruvian friends. So, on behalf of us all, *muchas gracias*.

This summit, and my trip over the past week, has obviously occurred against a backdrop of the broader debate over globalization and trade. As I've said, over the decades, our global, integrated economy has helped to improve the lives of billions of people around the world with historic gains in prosperity, education, and health. At the same time, when jobs and capital can move across borders, when workers have less leverage, when wealthy corporations and global elites too often seem to be playing by a different set of rules, then workers and communities can be hit especially hard. The gaps between the rich and everyone else grow wider. And that can reverberate through our politics.

That's why I firmly believe that one of our greatest challenges in the years ahead—across our nations and within them—will be to make sure that the benefits of the global economy are shared by more people and that the negative impacts, such as economic inequalities, are addressed by all nations. When it comes to trade, I believe that the answer is not to pull back or try to erect barriers to trade. Given our integrated economies and global supply chains, that would hurt us all. But rather, the answer is to do trade right, making sure that it has strong labor standards, strong environmental standards, that it addresses ways in which workers and ordinary people can benefit rather than be harmed by global trade. All of this is the central work of APEC.

As this debate moves forward in the United States, it's important to remember how vital the Asia-Pacific is to America's prosperity. The 21 Asia-Pacific economies here represent nearly 3 billion people, a majority of the global middle class, 6 of America's top 10 trading part-

ners, more than half of the global economy, and the world's fastest growing region. In other words, these 21 countries represent tremendous opportunity for the United States to sell our goods and support U.S. jobs. And that's why, as part of the rebalance of our foreign policy to the Asia-Pacific, we've boosted U.S. exports to the region by some 50 percent. Nearly 60 percent of our exports go to the region.

And this is part of broader progress. With 95 percent of the world's customers beyond America's borders, I've made it a priority to open up new markets overseas. And during my administration, we've increased U.S. exports to the world by more than 40 percent—to record levels—and these exports support more than 11 million American jobs. Moreover, we know that companies that export tend to grow faster and hire more employees and pay their workers more than companies that do not export. All of which is why exports have helped to drive our economic recovery. It's one of the reasons that U.S. businesses have created more than 15 million new jobs.

So that's the kind of progress that trade—when done right—can deliver. And that's the kind of work that we've tried to do here at this summit. We're continuing our work to make it easier to do business between our countries so we're creating even more jobs. In the United States, we're simplifying the process of starting a new business, increasing access to credit, all of which will help more ventures, especially small businesses, get up and running, and helping them to be able to export as well so that they can access a global market even if they can't afford fancy lawyers and accountants and foreign offices.

We agreed to increase our collective effort against corruption by targeting the bribery that enriches elites at the expense of people. And we committed to making it easier to trade in services as well as goods.

We also discussed the excess capacity that exists in certain sectors, like steel and aluminum, that distorts markets and hurts business and workers, including American workers. And even as I've argued that we cannot engage in protectionist measures, my administration has been at the forefront of really cracking down hard on unfair trade practices and brought consistently cases against the—cases under the WTO against those who are engaging in unfair trading practices, and we've had a great track record of trade enforcement that has to be a part of this process.

I've been very clear that excess capacity is not the result of market forces. It's the result of specific government policies and it needs to be fixed. And here at APEC, we've been taking steps—as we were at the G–20 in Hangzhou—to start addressing these issues in a systematic way.

With regard to the digital economy, we endorsed rules to protect the privacy of personal information as it crosses borders. We discussed the importance of maintaining the current moratorium on customs duties for digital goods and innovation. And giving—given growing cyber threats, our 21 APEC economies affirmed that no one should conduct or support cyber-enabled theft of intellectual property, including trade secrets, with the intent to providing a competitive advantage to companies or commercial sectors.

We're also moving ahead with making our economies more inclusive. And one particular area of focus is making sure that women have fair access to economic growth: expanding education; expanding access to careers in science, technology, engineering, and math; helping more women entrepreneurs to access finance and integrate their businesses into the global supply chain. According to one study, if women around the world participated in the labor force, it could add up to $28 trillion of additional output for the global economy—$28 trillion. When women are more prosperous, then families, communities, and countries are all more prosperous as well.

My meeting yesterday with my fellow leaders of the Trans-Pacific Partnership was a chance to reaffirm our commitment to the TPP, with its high standards, strong protections for workers, the environment, intellectual property, and human rights. Our partners made very clear during the meeting that they

want to move forward with TPP. Preferably, they'd like to move forward with the United States. A number of countries are already starting to ratify TPP.

At the same time, we're already hearing calls for a less ambitious trade agreement in the region with lower standards, lower protections for workers, lower protections for the environment. That kind of agreement would obviously exclude U.S. workers and businesses and access to those markets. So, for all those reasons, I believe that TPP is a plus for America's economy, America's workers, American jobs. I think not moving forward would undermine our position across the region and our ability to shape the rules of global trade in a way that reflects our interests and our values.

Finally, our cooperation with APEC has been critical to our historic progress in fighting climate change: bringing the Paris Agreement into force, agreeing to limit aviation emissions, phrasing out dangerous HFCs. Here in Lima, we continue our work to phase out fossil fuel subsidies, and countries made new commitments toward our goal of doubling our renewable energy over the next two decades.

So, as I wrap up my last summit and likely my last foreign trip as President, I could not be more proud of the progress that we've made together. Obviously, the work is never done. And given the prosperity and security we seek for not only the United States, but our allies and our partners, I continue to believe that America will have a vital role to play in creating and sustaining a strong, enduring leadership role in the Asia-Pacific.

So, with that, let me take some questions. And I'll start with Darlene Superville of AP.

President-Elect Donald J. Trump/President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia/Cybersecurity/U.S. Presidential Election

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You've been telling world leaders this week that President-elect Trump is unlikely to govern in the divisive way that he campaigned. But I'm wondering, how can you be so certain of that given that the first group of people he's chosen for top national security and law enforcement positions hold the same views that he espoused as a candidate? And second, to follow up on your meeting earlier today with President Putin, did you discuss with him Russia's alleged meddling in the U.S. election? And are you concerned that the kind of involvement that we saw in this year's campaign will be the new normal going forward in future U.S. elections?

The President. Good. Well, what I have said to world leaders is the same thing that I've said in a number of press conferences, which is the President-elect now has to put together a team and put forward specifics about how he intends to govern. And he hasn't had a full opportunity to do that yet. And so people should take a wait-and-see approach in how much his policy proposals once in the White House, once he is sworn in, matches up with some of the rhetoric of his campaign.

My simple point is, is that you can't assume that the language of campaigning matches up with the specifics of governing, legislation, regulations, and foreign policy.

I can't be sure of anything. I think, like everyone else, we'll have to wait and see. But as I've said before, once you're in the Oval Office, once you begin interacting with world leaders, once you see the complexities of the issues, that has a way of shaping your thinking and, in some cases, modifying your thinking, because you recognize this solemn responsibility not only to the American people, but the solemn responsibility that America has as the largest, most powerful country in the world.

And I can't guarantee that the President-elect won't pursue some of the positions that he's taken. But what I can guarantee is, is that reality will force him to adjust how he approaches many of these issues. That's just the way this office works.

And I've said before, if these issues were easy—if ensuring prosperity, jobs, security, good foreign relations with other countries—if all that was simple, then it would have been done by every previous President. And I'm a pretty good Presidential historian. I've looked at my 43 predecessors, and it seems like for all of them—even the best ones—that you end up confronting realities that you didn't anticipate.

I think the same will happen here. And that's a good thing. That's an important thing.

With respect to President Putin, I didn't have a meeting. We talked briefly while we were in between sessions. And the conversation that I had with him was consistent with the conversations I've had with him over the previous several months, indicating to him that we are still deeply concerned about the bloodshed and chaos that's being sown by constant bombing attacks by Asad and the Russian military against populations in Aleppo and the need for us to arrive first at some sort of humanitarian cease-fire and begin moving towards a political transition of some sort.

And I talked to him about Ukraine and the need for us to get Minsk done. I urged him to instruct his negotiators to work with ourselves, with France, with Germany, with Ukraine to see if we can get that done before my term is up. As usual, it was a candid and courteous meeting, but very clear about the strong differences that we have on policy.

The issue of the elections did not come up because that's behind us and I was focused in this brief discussion on moving forward. I had already made very clear to him our concerns around cyber attacks, generally, as well as specific concerns we had surrounding the DNC hack.

I don't think this will be the norm, but as I've said before, the concern I have has less to do with any particular misinformation or propaganda that's being put out by any particular party, and a greater concern about the general misinformation from all kinds of sources—both domestic, foreign, on social media—that make it very difficult to voters—for voters to figure out what's true and what's not. And let me put it this way. I think if we have a strong, accurate, and responsible press, and we have a strong, civic culture and an engaged citizenry, then various attempts to meddle in our elections won't mean much.

If, generally, we've got elections that aren't focused on issues and are full of fake news and false information and distractions, then the issue is not going to be what's happening from the outside. The issue is going to be what are we doing to ourselves from the inside. The good news is that's something that we have control over. All right?

Gardiner Harris [New York Times].

The President's Personal Finances/Government Ethics/President-Elect Donald J. Trump/National Security Agency/Cybersecurity

Q. Mr. President, thank you so much for holding this press conference. If you had had hotels, real estate, and other businesses distributed around the world prior to becoming President, would you have thought it appropriate to sell them off and put the cash proceeds in a blind trust? Or is it okay for the President of the United States to be personally vulnerable to the policy decisions of the foreign leaders he meets and in the foreign policy decisions he makes as President? And also, just briefly, what's your complaint about how the NSA and Cyber Command have done their job? And are you considering firing Admiral Mike Rogers?

The President. That was a rhetorical question, that first one. [*Laughter*]

Q. I'm hoping that you give us some sense of your beliefs.

The President. Rather than comment on hypotheticals, let me say specifically what I did.

Q. Okay.

The President. Obviously, my assets were significantly smaller than some other Presidents or President-elects. But we made a decision to liquidate assets that might raise questions about how it would influence policy.

I basically had our accountant put all our money in Treasury bills—the yields, by the way, have not been massive over the course of the last 8 years—[*laughter*]—just because it simplified my life. I did not have to worry about the complexities of whether a decision that I made might even inadvertently benefit me.

And that's consistent with the broader approach that we've taken throughout my administration, which is to not just meet the letter of the law, but to go well beyond the letter to the spirit of the law, not just for me, but for the people in the White House and in our leadership positions.

We have established a whole set of rules, norms, playbooks that just keep us far away from the line. Early on in the administration, there would be questions about, could a staff person go to this conference or what should they do about this gift that was provided? And I think it was maybe our first General Counsel who was responsible for setting up our guidelines and rules inside the White House that said, if it sounds like it would be fun, then you can't do it. [*Laughter*] That's a general test. If it sounds like something you would enjoy or appreciate, no-go.

And as a consequence—and I'll knock on some wood here, because we've got 2 months left—I am extremely proud of the fact that over 8 years we have not had the kinds of scandals that have plagued other administrations. And when I met with the President-elect, I suggested to him that having a strong White House Counsel that could provide clear guideposts and rules would benefit him and benefit his team because it would eliminate a lot of ambiguity. And I think it will be up to him to make determinations about how he wants to approach it.

I know what worked for us, and I think it served the American people well. And because I had made a promise to the American people that I would not fall into some of the familiar habits of Washington, that I wanted a new kind of politics, this was one indicator. And at the end of 8 years, I think I can say to the American people I delivered on that commitment.

With respect to cyber, the NSA, Admiral Rogers is a terrific patriot and has served this country well in a number of positions. I generally don't comment on personnel matters here. I can say generally that we've spent a lot of time over the last several years looking at how we can organize our cyber efforts to keep pace with how rapidly the environment is changing.

Increasingly, our critical infrastructure, government data, financial systems are vulnerable to attack. And both state and non–state actors are getting better and better at it, and it is becoming more and more rapid. And it is inevitable that we're going to have to modernize and update not just the tools we use to defend those assets and the American people, but also how we organize it. And it is true that we are exploring a range of options in terms of how we organize the mission that currently exists.

Rich Edson [Fox News].

2016 Presidential Election/Democratic Party/U.S. Electoral System/Former President George W. Bush/The President's Plans After Leaving Office

Q. Good evening, and thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Yes.

Q. Earlier this year, former President George W. Bush reportedly said that he warned, he would be the last Republican President. Now Republicans have won the White House, control the House and Senate, two-thirds of State legislatures, 34 Governorships, and there are charges of a shallow Democratic bench behind you. Are you worried you could be the last Democratic President for a while? And secondly, sir, speaking of your predecessor, he made sure to offer essentially no public criticism of you during your time in office. Will you equally withhold public criticism for President Trump, even if he attempts to dismantle much of what you've accomplished? Thank you.

The President. Well, no, I'm not worried about being the last Democratic President. I think——

Q. But for a while?

The President. Or not even for a while. And I say that not being cute. The Democratic nominee won the popular vote, and obviously, this was an extremely competitive race, and I would expect that future races will be competitive as well. I certainly think it's true that politics in America right now are a little up for grabs, that some of the old alignments within both parties—Democrat and Republican—are being reshaped. And although the results of this election involved some of the specifics of the candidates and aren't going to be duplicated in every subsequent election, Democrats do have to do some thinking about, how do we make sure that the message we have is received effectively and results in winning elections?

This is something that I've been wrestling with throughout my Presidency. When you look at the proposals I put forward, they garner majority support. The majority believes in raising the minimum wage. The majority believes in commonsense gun safety rules. The majority believes in investing to rebuild our infrastructure and create jobs. The majority believes in making sure that people aren't going bankrupt when they get sick. The majority agrees with all the individual components of Obamacare. [*Laughter*]

I think there was a Gallup poll this week, subsequent to the election, that showed that the general public has a more favorable view of Democrats than Republicans. And as I noted, my approval ratings are quite high. And yet what's been true during the course of my 8 years is that, that does not always translate. In fact, too often, it hasn't translated into working majorities either at the State level or at the Federal level.

Now, some of that is just the nature of our system and geography. Right? As long as Wyoming gets the same number of Senators as California, there's going to be some tilt towards Republicans when it comes to congressional races. The fact that a lot of Democratic voters are bunched up in big cities and a lot of Republican voters are spread out across geography gives them an advantage when it comes to congressional races.

Some of it is just political bad luck. For example, I came in as an economy was in free fall, and although we took the right steps to save the economy, in my midterm election in 2010, people couldn't yet see the recovery, and not surprisingly, the President's party got punished. We lost control of a lot of not just congressional seats, but also gubernatorial seats and State legislative seats. And that happened to be the year that the census is done and you start doing redistricting, and those Republicans took advantage of political gerrymandering to lock in majorities, even though in numerous subsequent elections, Democrats have actually cast more votes—or more votes have been cast for Democratic congressional candidates than Republican. And yet you end up having large Republican majorities.

So there are just some structural problems that we have to deal with. But look, you can't make excuses about the rules. That's the deal, and we've got to do better. And I think doing better, as I said, involves us working at the grassroots, not ceding territory. Going out into areas where right now we may not stand a chance of actually winning, but we're building up a cadre of young talent. We're making arguments. We're persuading. We're talking about the things that matter to ordinary people day to day and trying to avoid some of the constant distractions that fill up people's Twitter accounts.

And if we do that, then I'm confident that we'll be back on track. I don't think that there has to be a complete overhaul here. I think that there does have to be better organization, a smarter message. And one message I do have for Democrats is that a strategy that's just microtargeting particular, discrete groups in a Democratic coalition sometimes will win you elections, but it's not going to win you the broad mandate that you need. And ultimately, the more we can talk about what we have in common as a nation and speak to a broad set of values, a vision that speaks to everybody and not just one group at a time, the better off we're going to be.

I think that's part of the reason why I was able to get elected twice, is that I always tried to make sure that, not only in proposals, but also in message, that I was speaking to everybody.

You had a second part to your question?

Q. As for criticism of your successor?

The President. Ah. Look, I've said before, President Bush could not have been more gracious to me when I came in. And my intention is to, certainly for the next 2 months, just finish my job. And then, after that, to take Michelle on vacation—[*laughter*]—get some rest, spend time with my girls, and do some writing, do some thinking. So I want to be respectful of the office and give the President-elect an opportunity to put forward his platform and his arguments without somebody popping off in every instance.

As an American citizen who cares deeply about our country, if there are issues that have less to do with the specifics of some legislative proposal or battle, but go to core questions about our values and our ideals, and if I think that it's necessary or helpful for me to defend those ideals, then I'll examine it when it comes. But what I do know is, is that I have to take Michelle on vacation. [*Laughter*]

Juliet. Juliet Eilperin [Washington Post].

The President's Executive Authority/Syria/Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) Terrorist Organization

Q. Thanks, Mr. President. Given what you just said about the strong differences that you and President Putin have on the future of Syria and the conflict there, can you talk a little about how you see that unfolding, both at the end of your tenure, at the beginning of Donald Trump's, and whether you have concerns that even if we eliminate the Islamic State in eastern Syria and western Iraq, we may be allowing a permanent Al Qaida safe haven around Aleppo and Idlib? And on Aleppo, can you say to what extent you think the United States has fulfilled its responsibility to protect in that instance?

And then, in terms of finishing your job, which you just mentioned, in the last week, you exercised your executive authority on multiple fronts: finalizing oil and gas leasing rules on public lands as well as issuing a 5-year leasing plan banning drilling in the Arctic and the Atlantic. Many Republicans say that you should hold off finalizing anymore rules as you're headed out the door because they oppose many of them and will seek to overturn them when they control both the executive and the legislative branch next year. What do you say to that suggestion?

The President. Well, on the second question, these are the same Republicans who suggested that they didn't need to confirm a Supreme Court Justice when I was 9 months out, until the next election. I think their general approach seems to be that probably 2 days after my reelection, I should stop until the next election. I don't think that that's what the Constitution calls for.

The regulations that we have issued are ones that we've been working on for a very long time. They've been subject to extensive public notice and comment, and everybody has known they've been out there. These aren't things that we've been surprising people with. They're well considered, they're the right thing to do. They're part of my task of finishing my work.

And I recognize that when the new administration comes in and a new Congress comes in, that they will have the option of trying to undo some of those rules and regulations that we've put into place. And that's their prerogative. That's part of how democracy works. But I feel very strongly these are the right things to do, and I'm going to make sure I do them.

With respect to Syria, as I said, I think, even on this trip in a previous press conference, I am not optimistic about the short-term prospects in Syria. Once Russia and Iran made a decision to back Asad in a brutal air campaign and essentially a pacification of Aleppo, regardless of the potential for civilian casualties, children being killed or wounded, schools or hospitals being destroyed, then it was very hard to see a way in which even a trained and committed moderate opposition could hold its ground for long periods of time.

And the issue that obviously I've wrestled with for the last 5 years: How involved should the United States be? What are our legal constraints in such involvement? What are our moral obligations? What are our strategic interests? Those haven't changed. I continue to believe that we did not have a legal basis for military intervention there; that it would have been a strategic mistake given the work we still had to do in Iraq, the counter-ISIL campaign, ongoing operations in Afghanistan that we have worked tirelessly to arrive at a political transition of some sort and that could alleviate the suffering and provide humanitarian access. And we will continue to do that work all the way until the last day that me and John Kerry and others have the authority to speak for the United States Government.

But ultimately, it takes two—or in this case, four or six or eight—to tango. And we're just not getting help or interest from those parties that are supporting Asad, and Asad, as a consequence, has been emboldened. Look, this is a man who has decided that destroying his country, turning it to rubble, and seeing its population scattered or killed was worth it for him to cling to power when he had the option to peacefully engage in a transition that could have kept the country intact. That's his mentality. That's not a mentality we support. That's a mentality that the Russians and the Iranians have been willing to support. But at this stage, we're going to need to have a change in how all parties think about this in order for us to end the situation there.

Now, our ability to go after ISIL, I think, can be sustained. There's no doubt that there will continue to be extremist forces in and around Syria because it's still going to be in chaos for quite some time. There will be elements in Iraq, just as there have been elements in Afghanistan even after the Taliban we're swept out, even after we killed bin Laden. But I think we can effectively reduce the risk and take their key external operators off the field.

The thing I'm probably most concerned about is making sure that even as we do that, U.S. policy, U.S. statements, U.S. positions don't further radicalize Muslims around the world or alienate and potentially radicalized law-abiding Muslims who are living in Europe or the United States. And that's why I think it's important for us to understand those are our key allies in this fight, not enemies.

Mike Memoli [Los Angeles Times].

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi/Democratic Party/U.S. Presidency/U.S. Foreign Policy

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. This final foreign trip of your Presidency is obviously playing out in very different circumstances than you might have expected. A very different transition is underway than the one you might have envisioned. Given that, though, I wonder if you've intentionally sought to approach this trip reflecting more on the powers of and influence of the Presidency on the world stage so that you might be able to offer the kind of counsel to your successor that he has said he hopes to draw upon.

And also, on a political note, you talked often during your reelection campaign about this fever that had consumed the Republican Party, an effective political strategy that they employed to block you even on issues where there might have been some common ground.

The President. Right.

Q. What would be your advice to Democrats who might see that kind of strategy as the same kind of path to taking back power that the Republicans employed? And related to that, what would your advice be to House Democrats about whether or not to reelect Nancy Pelosi as the party leader in the House?

The President. Well, I'll work in reverse. I think Nancy Pelosi is an outstanding and historic political leader. So much of what we accomplished was accomplished because of her smarts, her tenacity, her legislative skill. And I don't normally meddle with party votes, and certainly on my way out the door, probably, I shouldn't meddle here. But I cannot speak highly enough of Nancy Pelosi. She combines strong, progressive values with just extraordinary political skill. And she does stuff that's tough, not just stuff that's easy. She's done stuff that's unpopular in her own base because it's the right thing to do for the American people. I think she's a remarkable leader.

With respect to Democrats and Republicans and how Democrats should deal with a new administration, I think you give them a hearing. I certainly don't want them to do what Mitch McConnell did when I was elected: meet the day of and say our sole objective is to not cooperate with him on anything even if the country is about to go into a depression so that we can gain seats in the midterms and ultimately defeat him.

That's not why the American people send us to Washington, to play those games. So that's not my advice to Democrats. My advice to Democrats is, know what you care about and what you stand for, and fight for your principles even if it's a hard fight. If there are areas where the new administration is doing

something that's going to be good for the American people, find a way to work with them. If you think it's going to be a problem, then say so and make the argument.

The touchstone is, what's good for the American people. And that's worked for me. It means that at the end of the day—and at the end of 8 years—I can look back, and I can say that I consistently did what I thought was best. It doesn't mean you don't make mistakes, but it means that you're being true to your oath and the commitments you made to the people who elected you.

And in terms of reflecting on the U.S. Presidency as I've been traveling, I think the main reflection I have and the main advice that I give to the incoming President is, the United States really is an indispensable nation in our world order. And I say that as somebody who has gone out of his way to express respect for every country and its people and to consistently acknowledge that many of the challenges that we face are not challenges that America can solve on its own. But what I also know is that the basic framework of the world order coming out of World War II and then on through the end of the cold war was shaped by a set of ideals and principles that have worked for the vast majority of people, not just America, but around the world. The notion of democracy and rule of law and a free press and an independent judiciary and open markets and a social welfare state to moderate some off the sharp edges of capitalism and lifting up issues of human rights and investing in public health and development—not just within our own borders, but elsewhere in the world—and working with multilateral institutions like the United Nations, making sure that we're upholding international norms and rules.

That's what's made the modern world. And there have been times where we, ourselves, have not observed some of these norms as well as we should and have been accused of hypocrisy. Here in Latin America, there have been times where countries felt disrespected and, on occasion, had cause for that. There are times where we haven't observed these values in our own country and have fallen short of our ideals. But that basic structure is the reason why the world is much wealthier, much more secure, and, yes, less violent, healthier, better educated, more tolerant than it was 50 years ago.

And that requires constant work. It doesn't just happen on its own. I've said this in Europe. I've said this in places where there's this pushback against this modern order. But you take an example like Europe, before that order was imposed, we had two World Wars in the span of 30 years. In the second one, 60 million people were killed. Not half a million, not a million, but 60 million. Entire continents in rubble.

In places like Asia—the Asia-Pacific, before that order existed, you routinely saw famines of millions of people, not just concerns about low wages, but people dying because they didn't have any food or drinking water or died of cholera or simple diseases—if somebody had some penicillin.

And so what I would say would be that we all share responsibilities for improving that order and maintaining it and making sure it's more inclusive and delivers greater hope and prosperity for more corners of the world. We all have responsibilities—every nation—in respecting the dignity and worth of their citizens. And America can't do it all for everybody else. There are limits to our reach into other countries if they're determined to oppress their people or not provide girls education or siphon off development funds into Swiss bank accounts because they're corrupt. We're not going to be able to handle every problem.

But the American President and the United States of America—if we're not on the side of what's right, if we're not making the argument and fighting for it, even if sometimes we're not able to deliver it a hundred percent everywhere—then it collapses. And there's nobody to fill the void. There really isn't. There are other very important countries, like a China, where we can't—if it weren't for China's cooperation, we couldn't have gotten the Paris Agreement done. But China is not the one who was going around organizing 200 nations to sign on to a Paris Agreement or putting togeth-

er the paper and the policy outlines and the conceptual framework.

Russia is a very significant military power, but they're not worrying right now about how to rebuild after a hurricane in Haiti. We are.

And I've said before, that's a burden that we should carry proudly. And I would hope that not just the 45th President of the United States, but every President of the United States understands that that's not only a burden, but it's also an extraordinary privilege. And if you have a chance to do that right, then you should seize it.

All right? Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 5:52 p.m. at the Nasca Room in the Ministry of Cultural Affairs Building. In his remarks, the President referred to President Bashar al-Asad of Syria; former White House Counsel Gregory B. Craig; 2016 Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton; and Supreme Court Associate Justice–designate Merrick B. Garland.

Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom
November 22, 2016

The President. Thank you. Everybody, please have a seat. We've got some work to do here. [*Laughter*] This is not all fun and games. [*Laughter*]

Welcome to the White House, everybody. Today we celebrate extraordinary Americans who have lifted our spirits, strengthened our Union, pushed us toward progress.

I always love doing this event, but this is a particularly impressive class. [*Laughter*] We've got innovators and artists, public servants, rabble rousers, athletes, renowned character actors, like the guy from "Space Jam." [*Laughter*] We pay tribute to those distinguished individuals with our Nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Now, let me tell you a little bit about each of them.

First, we came close to missing out on a Bill and Melinda Gates's incredible partnership. Because apparently Bill's opening line was, "Do you want to go out 2 weeks from this coming Saturday?" [*Laughter*] I mean, he's good with computers, but—[*laughter*].

Fortunately, Melinda believes in second chances. And the world is better for it. For two decades, the Gates Foundation has worked to provide lifesaving medical care to millions, boosting clean water supplies, improving education for our children, rallying aggressive international action on climate change, cutting childhood mortality in half. The list could go on.

These two have donated more money to charitable causes than anyone ever. Many years ago, Melinda's mom told her an old saying: "To know that even one life has breathed easier because you lived, that is success." And by this and just about any other measure, few in human history have been more successful than these two impatient optimists.

Frank Gehry has never let popular acclaim reverse his impulse to defy convention. "I was an outsider from the beginning," he says, "so for better or worse, I thrived on it." The child of poor Jewish immigrants, Frank grew up in Los Angeles, and throughout his life, he embraced the spirit of a city defined by an open horizon. He's spent his life rethinking shapes and mediums, seemingly the force of gravity itself; the idea of what architecture could be, he decided to upend, constantly repurposing every material available, from titanium to paper towel tube. He's inspiring our next generation through his advocacy for arts education in our schools. And from the Guggenheim to Bilbao to Chicago's Millennium Park—our hometown—to his home in Santa Monica, which I understand caused some consternation among his neighbors—[*laughter*]—Frank's work teaches us that while buildings may be sturdy and fixed to the ground, like all great art, they can lift our spirits. They can soar and broaden our horizons.

When an undergraduate from rural Appalachia first set foot on the National Mall many years ago, she was trying to figure out a way to show that "war is not just a victory or a loss," but "about individual lives." She considered how the landscape might shape that message, rather than the other way around. The project that Maya Lin designed for her college class earned her a B-plus—[*laughter*]—and a permanent place in American history. [*Laughter*] So all of you B-plus students out there—[*laughter*].

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial has changed the way we think about monuments, but also about how we think about sacrifice and patriotism and ourselves. Maya has given us more than just places for remembering; she has created places for us to make new memories. Her sculptures, chapels, homes are "physical act[s] of poetry," each reminding us that the most important element in art or architecture is human emotion.

Three minutes before Armstrong and Aldrin touched down on the Moon, *Apollo 11*'s lunar lander alarms triggered: red and yellow lights across the board. Our astronauts didn't have much time. But thankfully, they had Margaret Hamilton. A young MIT scientist—and a working mom in the sixties—Margaret led the team that created the onboard flight software that allowed the Eagle to land safely. And keep in mind that, at this time, software engineering wasn't even a field yet. There were no textbooks to follow, so, as Margaret says, "There was no choice but to be pioneers."

Luckily for us, Margaret never stopped pioneering. And she symbolizes the generation of unsung women who helped spend—send humankind into space. Her software architecture echoes in countless technologies today. And her example speaks of the American spirit of discovery that exists in every little girl and little boy who know that somehow, to look beyond the heavens is to look deep within ourselves and to figure out just what is possible.

If Wright is flight and Edison is light, then Hopper is code. [*Laughter*] Born in 1906, Rear Admiral Grace Murray Hopper followed her mother into mathematics, earned her Ph.D. from Yale, and set out on a long and storied career. At age 37, and a full 15 pounds below military guidelines—[*laughter*]—the gutsy and colorful Grace joined the Navy and was sent to work on one of the first computers, Harvard's Mark I.

She saw beyond the boundaries of the possible and invented the first compiler, which allowed programs to be written in regular language and then translated for computers to understand. While the women who pioneered software were often overlooked, the most prestigious award for young computer scientists now bear her name. From cell phones to cyber command, we can thank Grace Hopper for opening programming to millions more people, helping to usher in the Information Age, and profoundly shaping our digital world.

Speaking of really smart people—[*laughter*]—in the summer of 1950, a young University of Chicago physicist found himself at Los Alamos National Laboratory. Dick Garwin was there, he said, because Chicago paid its faculty for 9 months, but his family ate for 12. So, by the next summer, Dick had helped create the hydrogen bomb. And for the rest of his life, he dedicated himself to reducing the threat of nuclear war. Dick's not only an architect of the atomic age. Ever since he was a Cleveland kid tinkering with his father's movie projectors, he's never met a problem he didn't want to solve. Reconnaissance satellites, the MRI, GPS technology, the touchscreen all bear his fingerprints. He even patented a "mussel washer" for shellfish which—that I haven't used. [*Laughter*] The other stuff I have. [*Laughter*] Where is he? Okay.

Dick has advised nearly every President since Eisenhower, often rather bluntly. Enrico Fermi, also a pretty smart guy, is said to have called Dick "the only true genius" he ever met. I do want to see this mussel washer. [*Laughter*]

Along with these scientists, artists, and thinkers, we also honor those who have shaped our culture from the stage and the screen.

In her long and extraordinary career, Cicely Tyson has not only exceeded as an actor, she has shaped the course history. Cicely was never the likeliest of Hollywood stars. The daugh-

ter of immigrants from the West Indies, she was raised by a hard-working and religious mother who cleaned houses and forbade her children to attend the movies. But once she got her education and broke into the business, Cicely made a conscious decision not just to say lines, but to speak out. "I would not accept roles," she said, "unless they projected us, particularly women, in a realistic light, [and] dealt with us as human beings." And from "Sounder," to "The Trip to Bountiful," to "The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman," Cicely's convictions and grace have helped for us to see the dignity of every single beautiful member of the American family. And she's just gorgeous. And—[*applause*]. Yes, she is.

In 1973, a critic wrote of Robert De Niro, "This kid doesn't just act, he takes off into the vapors." [*Laughter*] And it was true, his characters are iconic: a Sicilian father turned New York mobster, a mobster who runs a casino, a mobster who needs therapy—[*laughter*]—a father-in-law who is scarier than a mobster—[*laughter*]—Al Capone, a mobster. [*Laughter*]

Robert combines dramatic precision and, it turns out, comedic timing with his signature eye for detail. And while the name De Niro is synonymous with "tough guy," his true gift is the sensitivity that he brings to each role. This son of New York artists didn't stop at becoming one of the world's great actors. He's also a director, a philanthropist, cofounder of the Tribeca Film Festival. Of his tireless preparation, from learning the saxophone to remaking his body, he once said, "I feel I have to earn the right to play a part." And the result is honest and authentic art that reveals who we really are.

In 1976, Lorne Michaels implored the Beatles to reunite on his brandnew show. [*Laughter*] In exchange, he offered them $3,000. [*Laughter*] And then he told them they could share it equally, or they could give Ringo a smaller cut. [*Laughter*] Which was early proof that Lorne Michaels has a good sense of humor.

On "Saturday Night Live," he's created a world where a band of no names become comedy's biggest stars; where our friends the Coneheads and cheerleaders and land sharks and basement deadbeats and motivational speakers and an unfrozen caveman lawyer show up and Tom Hanks is on "Black Jeopardy." [*Laughter*] After four decades, even in this fractured media culture that we've got, SNL remains appointment viewing; a mainline into not just our counterculture, but our culture; still a challenge to the powerful, especially folks like me.

And yet, even after all these years, Lorne jokes that his tombstone should bear just a single word that's often found in the show's reviews: "uneven." [*Laughter*] As a current U.S. Senator would say: "Doggone it, Lorne, that's why people like you." Hey, he's produced—he produced a Senator too. It's pretty impressive.

Ellen DeGeneres has a way of making you laugh about something rather than at someone, except when I danced on her show; she laughed at me. [*Laughter*] But that's okay.

It's easy to forget now, when we've come so far, where now marriage is equal under the law, just how much courage was required for Ellen to come out on the most public of stages almost 20 years ago. Just how important it was not just to the LGBT community, but for all of us, to see somebody so full of kindness and light, somebody we liked so much, somebody who could be our neighbor or our colleague or our sister challenge our own assumptions, remind us that we have more in common than we realize, push our country in the direction of justice.

What an incredible burden that was to bear: to risk your career like that—people don't do that very often—and then to have the hopes of millions on your shoulders. But it's like Ellen says: "We all want a tortilla chip that can support the weight of guacamole." [*Laughter*] Which really makes no sense to me, but I thought would break the mood, because I was getting kind of choked up. [*Laughter*] And she did pay a price. We don't remember this. I hadn't remembered it. She did, for a pretty long stretch of time, even in Hollywood.

And yet, today—every day, in every way—Ellen counters what too often divides us with the countless things that bind us together,

inspires us to be better, one joke, one dance at a time.

When "The Candidate" wins his race in the iconic 1972 film of the same name—which continues, by the way, for those of you who haven't seen it, and many of you are too young, to be perhaps the best movie about what politics is actually like, ever—he famously asks his campaign manager the reflective and revealing question: "What do we do now?" And like the man he played in that movie, Robert Redford has figured it out and applied his talent and charm to achieve success.

We admire Bob not just for his remarkable acting, but for having figured out what to do next. He created a platform for independent filmmakers with the Sundance Institute. He has supported our national parks and our natural resources as one of the foremost conservationists of our generation. He's given his unmatched charisma to unforgettable characters like Roy Hobbs, Nathan Muir, and of course, the Sundance Kid, entertaining us for more than half a century. As an actor, director, producer, and as an advocate, he has not stopped—and apparently drives so fast that he had breakfast in Napa and dinner in Salt Lake. [*Laughter*] At 80 years young, Robert Redford has no plans to slow down.

According to a recent headline, the movie "Sully" was the last straw. We should never travel with Tom Hanks. [*Laughter*] I mean, you think about, you got pirates, plane crashes, you get marooned in airport purgatory, volcanoes—something happens with Tom Hanks. [*Laughter*] And yet, somehow, we can't resist going where he wants to take us. He's been an accidental witness to history, a crusty woman's baseball manager, an everyman who fell in love with Meg Ryan three times. [*Laughter*] Made it seem natural to have a volleyball as your best friend. From a Philadelphia courtroom, to Normandy's beachheads, to the dark side of the Moon, he has introduced us to America's unassuming heroes.

Tom says he just saw "ordinary guys who did the right thing at the right time." Well, it takes one to know one, and "America's Dad" has stood up to cancer with his beloved wife Rita. He has championed our veterans, supported space exploration, and the truth is, Tom has always saved his best roles for real life. He is a good man, which is the best title you can have.

So we've got innovators, entertainers. Three more folks who've dedicated themselves to public service.

In the early 1960s, thousands of Cuban children fled to America, seeking an education they'd never get back home. And one refugee was 15-year-old named Eduardo Padron, whose life changed when he enrolled at Miami Dade College. That decision led to a bachelor's degree, then a master's degree, then a Ph.D. And then he had a choice: He could go into corporate America, or he could give back to his alma mater. And Eduardo made his choice: to create more stories just like his.

As Miami Dade's President since 1995, Dr. Padron has built a "dream factory" for one of our Nation's most diverse student bodies: 165,000 students in all. He is one of the world's preeminent education leaders: thinking out of the box, supporting students throughout their lives, embodying the belief that we're only as great as the doors we open. Eduardo's example is one we can all follow: a champion of those who strive for the same American Dream that first drew him to our shores.

When Elouise Cobell first filed a lawsuit to recover lands and money for her people, she didn't set out to be a hero. She said, "I just wanted . . . to give people—I just wanted to give justice to people that didn't have it." And her lifelong quest to address the mismanagement of American Indian lands, resources, trust funds wasn't about special treatment, but the equal treatment at the heart of the American promise. She fought for almost 15 years, across three Presidents, seven trials, 10 appearances before a Federal appeals court. All the while, she traveled the country some 40 weeks a year, telling the story of her people. And in the end, this graduate of a one-room schoolhouse became a MacArthur "genius." She is a proud daughter of Montana's Blackfeet Nation. Reached ultimately a historic victory for all Native Americans. Through sheer force of will and a belief that the truth will win

out, Elouise Cobell overcame the longest odds, reminding us that fighting for what is right is always worth it.

Now, every journalist in the room, every media critic knows the phrase Newt Minow coined: the "vast wasteland." But the two words Newt prefers we remember from his speech to the nation's broadcasters are these: "public interest." That's been the heartbeat of his life's work: advocating for residents of public housing, advising a Governor and Supreme Court Justice, cementing Presidential debates as our national institution, leading the FCC.

When Newt helped launch the first communications satellites, making nationwide broadcasts possible and eventually GPS possible and cell phones possible, he predicted it would be more important than the Moon landing. "This will launch ideas into space," he said, "and ideas last longer than people." As far as I know, he's the only one of today's honorees who was present on my first date with Michelle. [*Laughter*] Imagine our surprise when we saw Newt, one of our bosses that summer, at the movie theater: "Do the Right Thing." So he's also been vital to my personal interests. [*Laughter*]

And finally, we honor five of the alltime greats in sports and music.

The game of baseball has a handful of signature sounds. You hear the crack of the bat. You've got the crowd singing in the seventh inning stretch. And you've got the voice of Vin Scully. Most fans listen to a game's broadcast when they can't be at the ballpark. Generations of Dodgers fans brought their radios into the stands, because you didn't want to miss one of Vin's stories.

Most play-by-play announcers partner with an analyst in the booth to chat about the action. Vin worked alone and talked just with us. Since Jackie Robinson started at second base, Vin taught us the game and introduced it—us to its players. He narrated the improbable years, the impossible heroics, turned contests into conversations. When he heard about this honor, Vin asked with characteristic humility, "Are you sure?" [*Laughter*] "I'm just an old baseball announcer." And we had to inform him that to Americans of all ages, you are an old friend. In fact, I thought about him doing all these citations—[*laughter*]—which would have been very cool. [*Laughter*] But I thought we shouldn't make him sing for his supper like that. [*Laughter*] "Up next"—[*laughter*].

Here's how great Kareem Abdul-Jabbar was: 1967, he had spent a year dominating college basketball, the NCAA bans the dunk. They'd didn't say it was about Kareem, but it was about Kareem. [*Laughter*] When a sport changes its rules to make it harder just for you, you are really good. [*Laughter*] And yet, despite the rule change, he was still the sport's most unstoppable force. It's a title he'd hold for more than two decades, winning NBA Finals MVPs a staggering 14 years apart.

[*At this point, an audience member sneezed.*]

The President. Bless you. [*Laughter*]

And as a surprisingly similar-looking copilot, Roger Murdoch, once said in the movie "Airplane"—I mean, we've got some great actors here—"Space Jam," "Airplane." [*Laughter*] He did it all while dragging Walton and Lanier up and down the court for 48 minutes. But the reason we honor Kareem is more than just a pair of goggles and the "skyhook." He stood up for his Muslim faith when it wasn't easy and it wasn't popular. He's as comfortable sparring with Bruce Lee as he is advocating on Capitol Hill or writing with extraordinary eloquence about patriotism. Physically, intellectually, spiritually, Kareem is one of a kind, an American who illuminates both our most basic freedoms and our highest aspirations.

When he was 5 years old, Michael Jordan nearly cut off his big toe with an axe. [*Laughter*] Back then, his handles needed a little work. But think: If things had gone differently, Air Jordans might never have taken flight. [*Laughter*] I mean, you don't want to buy a shoe with, like, one toe missing. [*Laughter*] We may never have seen him switch hands in midair against the Lakers or drop 63 in the Garden or gut it out in the "flu game" or hit "the shot" three different times: over Georgetown, over Ehlo, over Russell. We might not have seen him take on Larry Bird in H–O–R–S–E or lift

up the sport globally along with the Dream Team.

Yet MJ is still more than those moments, more than just the best player on the two greatest teams of all time: the Dream Team and the 1996 Chicago Bulls. [*Laughter*] He's more than just a logo, more than just an Internet meme. [*Laughter*] He's more than just a charitable donor or a business owner committed to diversity. There is a reason you call somebody "the Michael Jordan of"—[*laughter*]. Michael Jordan of neurosurgery or the Michael Jordan of rabbis—[*laughter*]—or the Michael Jordan of outrigger canoeing—and they know what you're talking about. Because Michael Jordan is the Michael Jordan of greatness. He is the definition of somebody so good at what they do that everybody recognizes it. That's pretty rare.

As a child, Diana Ross loved singing and dancing for family friends, but not for free. [*Laughter*] She was smart enough to pass the hat. And later, in Detroit's Brewster housing projects, she met Mary Wilson and Florence Ballard. Their neighbor, Smokey Robinson, put them in front of Berry Gordy, and the rest was magic, music history. The Supremes earned a permanent place in the American soundtrack.

Along with her honey voice, her soulful sensibility, Diana exuded glamour and grace and filled stages that helped to shape the sound of Motown. On top of becoming one of the most successful recording artists of all time, raised five kids, somehow found time to earn an Oscar nomination for acting. Today, from the hip-hop that samples her, to the young singers who've been inspired by her, to the audiences that still cannot get enough of her, Diana Ross's influence is inescapable as ever.

He was sprung from a cage out on Highway 9. [*Laughter*] Quiet kid from Jersey, just trying to make sense of the temples of dreams and the mystery that dotted his hometown: pool halls, bars; girls and cars; altars and assembly lines. And for decades, Bruce Springsteen has brought us all along on a journey consumed with the bargains between ambition and injustice and pleasure and pain; the simple glories and scattered heartbreak of everyday life in America.

To create one of his biggest hits, he once said: "I wanted to craft a record that sounded like the last record on Earth . . . the last one you'd ever need to hear. One glorious noise . . . then the apocalypse." [*Laughter*] Every restless kid in America was given a story: "Born To Run."

He didn't stop there. Once he told us about himself, he told us about everybody else: steelworker in "Youngstown"; the Vietnam vet in "Born To Run"—"Born in the U.S.A."; the sick and the marginalized on "The Streets of Philadelphia"; the firefighter carrying the weight of a reeling but resilient nation on "The Rising"; the young soldier reckoning with "Devils and Dust" in Iraq; the communities knocked down by recklessness and greed in the "Wrecking Ball"; all of us, with all our faults and our failings, every color and class and creed, bound together by one defiant, restless train rolling toward "The Land of Hope and Dreams." These are all anthems of our America, the reality of who we are and the reverie of who we want to be.

"The hallmark of a rock and roll band," Bruce Springsteen once said, is that "the narrative you tell together is bigger than anyone could have told on your own." And for decades, alongside the Big Man, Little Steven, a Jersey girl named Patti, and all the men and women of the E Street Band, Bruce Springsteen has been carrying the rest of us on his journey, asking us all "what is the work for us to do in our short time here."

I am the President; he is "The Boss." [*Laughter*] And pushing 70, he's still laying down 4-hour live sets. If you have not been at them, he is working. "Fire-breathing rock 'n' roll." So I thought twice about giving him a medal named for freedom because we hope he remains, in his words, a "prisoner of rock 'n' roll" for years to come.

So, I told you, this is, like, a really good class. [*Laughter*]

Ladies and gentlemen, I want you all to give it up for the recipients of the 2016 Presidential Medal of Freedom. [*Applause*] It is a good group.

All right. Now we've actually got to give them medals. [*Laughter*] So please be patient. We are going to have my military aide read the citations. Each one of them will come up and receive the medals, and then we'll wrap up the program.

Okay? Let's hit it.

[*At this point, Lt. Col. Andrew C. Steadman, USA, Army Aide to the President, read the citations, and the President presented the medals, assisted by Lt. Col. Wesley N. Spurlock III, USAF, Air Force Aide to the President.*]

The President. So, just on a personal note, part of the reason that these events are so special to me is because everybody on this stage has touched me in a very powerful, personal way, in ways that they probably couldn't imagine. Whether it was having been inspired by a song or a game or a story or a film or a monument or in the case of Newt Minow introducing me to Michelle—[*laughter*]—these are folks who have helped make me who I am and think about my Presidency, and what also makes them special is, this is America.

And it's useful when you think about this incredible collection of people to realize that this is what makes us the greatest nation on Earth. Not because of what we—not because of our differences, but because, in our difference, we find something common to share. And what a glorious thing that is. What a great gift that is to America.

So I want all of you to enjoy the wonderful reception that will be taking place afterwards. Michelle and I have to get back to work, unfortunately, but I hear the food is pretty good. [*Laughter*] And I would like all of you to give one big rousing round of applause to our 2016 honorees for the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Give it up.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:13 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Elaine Amerland French, mother of Melinda French Gates, cofounder of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; *Apollo 11* crewmember Edwin E. "Buzz" Aldrin, Jr.; Sen. Alan S. Franken; musicians Ringo Starr, Mary Wilson, William "Smokey" Robinson, Steven Van Zandt, and Patti Scialfa; actor Meg Ryan; Rita Wilson, wife of medal recipient Thomas J. Hanks; former National Basketball Association players William T. Walton III, Robert J. Lanier, Joel C. Ehlo, Byron D. Russell, and Larry J. Bird; Berry Gordy, Jr., founder, Motown Records; and Chudney, Evan, and Tracee Ellis Ross, Rhonda Ross Kendrick, and Ross Arne Naess, children of musician Diana Ross. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the reading of the citations.

Remarks at the Thanksgiving Turkey Presentation Ceremony
November 23, 2016

The President. Hey! Thank you so much, everybody. Please have a seat, have a seat.

For generations, Presidents have faithfully executed two great American traditions: issuing a proclamation that sets aside a Thursday in November for us to express gratitude, and granting pardons that reflect our beliefs in second chances. And this week, we do both. [*Laughter*]

Of course, Thanksgiving is a family holiday as much as a national one. So, for the past 7 years, I've established another tradition: embarrassing my daughters with a "corny-copia" of dad jokes about turkeys. [*Laughter*] This year, they had a scheduling conflict. [*Laughter*] Actually, they just couldn't take my jokes anymore. [*Laughter*] They were "fed" up.

Audience members. Ooh!

Audience member. Hey!

The President. Fortunately, I have by my side here today two of my nephews, Austin and Aaron Robinson, who, unlike Malia and Sasha, have not yet been turned cynical by Washington. [*Laughter*] They still believe in bad puns. They still appreciate the grandeur of this occasion. They still have hope. [*Laughter*]

Malia and Sasha, by the way, are thankful that this is my final Presidential turkey pardon. What I haven't told them yet is that we are going to do

this every year from now on. [*Laughter*] No cameras. Just us. Every year. No way I'm cutting this habit cold turkey. [*Laughter*]

Good one, yes? That was pretty funny. Yes? [*Laughter*]

Thanksgiving is a chance—[*laughter*]—to gather with loved ones, reflect on our many blessings, and after a long campaign season, finally turn our attention from polls to poultry. [*Laughter*] This year, we're honored to be joined by two of the lucky ones, who were raised by the Domino family in Iowa: Tater and Tot.

Now, Tater is here in a backup role, just in case Tot can't fulfill his duties. So he's sort of like the Vice Turkey. [*Laughter*] We're working on getting him a pair of aviator glasses. [*Laughter*]

And it is my great privilege—well, it's my privilege; actually, let's just say it's my job—[*laughter*]—to grant them clemency this afternoon. As I do, I want to take a moment to recognize the brave turkeys who weren't so lucky, who didn't get to ride the gravy train to freedom—[*laughter*]—who met their faith—fate with courage and sacrifice and proved that they weren't chicken. [*Laughter*]

[*At this point, a baby cried.*]

The President. Oh, it's not that bad now. Come on. [*Laughter*]

Of course, we have a lot to be thankful for this Thanksgiving: 6 straight years of job creation, the longest streak ever; low unemployment. Wages are rising again. Inequality is narrowing. The housing market is healing. The stock market has nearly tripled. Our high school graduation rate is at an alltime high. And our uninsured rate is at an alltime low, thanks to the 20 million more Americans, including millions of children, who finally know the security of health insurance. Proud families—[*applause*]—that's worth gobbling about. [*Laughter*]

Proud families across the country are finally complete now that marriage equality is the law of the land. And there are many families of servicemembers who had empty chairs at the table in recent years, but who on this Thanksgiving can celebrate with our brave troops and veterans who we've welcomed home.

Thanksgiving is also a reminder of the source of our national strength: that out of many, we are one; that we're bound not by any one race or religion, but rather by an adherence to a common creed, that all of us are created equal. And while accepting our differences and building a diverse society has never been easy, it has never been more important. We are a people that look out for one another and get each other's backs. We keep moving forward, defined by values and ideals that have been a light to all humanity.

We have to see ourselves in each other, because we've all got families we love, and we all have hopes for their better future. And we lose sight of that sometimes, and Thanksgiving is a good time for us to remember that. We have a lot more in common than divides us.

The holidays are also a time when it's even more important to reach out to those who need a helping hand. I believe we're judged by how we care for the poor and the vulnerable, the sick and the elderly, the immigrant, the refugee, everybody who's trying to get a second chance. I believe that in order to truly live up to those ideals, we have to continually fight discrimination in all its forms and always show the world that America is a generous and giving country.

We should also make sure everyone has something to eat on Thanksgiving—of course, except the turkeys, because they're already stuffed. [*Laughter*] So, later today the——

Audience members. Ooh!

The President. [*Laughter*] So, later today the Obama family will participate in our traditional Thanksgiving service project. And when somebody at your table tells you that you've been hogging all the side dishes and you can't have any more, I hope that you respond with a creed that sums up the spirit of a hungry people: Yes, we cran. [*Laughter*] That was good. [*Laughter*] You don't think that's funny? Look, I know there are some bad ones in here, but this is the last time I'm doing this, so we're not leaving any room for leftovers. [*Laughter*]

Let me just say—how am I doing? Good?

Austin Robinson. Good.

The President. Thumbs up?

Let me just say one last thing before I spare these turkeys' lives. On this Thanksgiving, I want to express my sincere gratitude to the American people for the trust that you've placed in me over these last 8 years and the incredible kindness that you've shown my family. On behalf of Michelle and my mother-in-law and our girls, we want to thank you so very, very much.

And now, from the Rose Garden, Tater and Tot will go to their new home at Virginia Tech, which is admittedly a bit Hokie. [*Laughter*] They'll get to live out their natural lives at a new facility called Gobblers Rest, where students and veterinarians will care for them. And so let's get on with the pardoning, because it's Wednesday afternoon, and everyone knows that Thanksgiving traffic can put people in a "fowl" mood.

Audience members. Ooh! [*Laughter*]

The President. Happy Thanksgiving, everybody. Let's go pardon these turkeys. Come on, guys! Come on! Come on!

[*The President pardoned the turkeys, accompanied by his nephews Austin and Aaron L. Robinson.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:42 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Storm Lake, IA, turkey farmers Chris and Nicole Domino. He also referred to his mother-in-law Marian Robinson. The related proclamation is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President's Weekly Address
November 24, 2016

Hi, everybody. On behalf of the Obama family—Michelle, Malia, Sasha, Grandma, Bo, and Sunny—I want to wish you a very happy Thanksgiving. Like so many of you, we'll spend the day with friends and family, turkey and touchdowns. We'll give thanks for each other and for all that God has given us. And we'll reflect on what truly binds us as Americans.

That's never been more important. As a country, we've just emerged from a noisy, passionate, and sometimes divisive campaign season. After all, elections are often where we emphasize what sets us apart. We face off in a contest of us versus them. We focus on the candidate we support instead of some of the ideals that we share.

But a few short weeks later, Thanksgiving reminds us that no matter our differences, we're still one people, part of something bigger than ourselves. We are communities that move forward together. We're neighbors who look out for one another, especially those among us with the least. We are always, simply, Americans.

That's why, through the fog of Civil War, President Lincoln saw what mattered most: the unalienable truths for which so many gave their lives and which made possible "a new birth of freedom." And so, precisely when the fate of the Union hung in the balance, he boldly proclaimed a day of Thanksgiving, when the Nation's gifts "should be solemnly, reverently, and gratefully acknowledged, as with one heart and one voice by the whole American people."

Today we continue to give thanks for those blessings and to all who ensured that they would be our inheritance. We remember the determined patriots who landed at the edge of the world in search of freedom. We give thanks to the brave men and women who defend that freedom in every corner of the world. And we honor all people—from the First Americans to our newest arrivals—who continue to shape our Nation's story, enrich our heritage, and give meaning to our founding values, values we must never take for granted: that in America, we are bound not by any one race or religion, but rather an adherence to a common belief, that all of us are created equal; that we may think and worship and speak and love as we please; that the gift of democracy is ours—and ours alone—to nurture and to protect.

Never doubt, that is what makes us American: not where we come from, what we look

like, or what faith we practice, but the ideals to which we pledge our allegiance. It's about our capacity to live up to the creed as old as our founding: *e pluribus unum*—that out of many, we are one. And as long as we continue to welcome the contributions of all people, as long as we stand up for each other, speak out for what is right and stay true to these ideals—not just when it's easy, but when it's hard—then no one can ever take away our liberty. Our best days will always be ahead. And we will keep building a future where all of our children know the promise of America.

Happy Thanksgiving, everybody.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 11:40 a.m. on November 23 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on November 24. In the address, the President referred to his mother-in-law Marian Robinson. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 23, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on November 24. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the Death of Former President Fidel Alejandro Castro Ruz of Cuba
November 26, 2016

At this time of Fidel Castro's passing, we extend a hand of friendship to the Cuban people. We know that this moment fills Cubans—in Cuba and in the United States—with powerful emotions, recalling the countless ways in which Fidel Castro altered the course of individual lives, families, and of the Cuban nation. History will record and judge the enormous impact of this singular figure on the people and world around him.

For nearly six decades, the relationship between the United States and Cuba was marked by discord and profound political disagreements. During my Presidency, we have worked hard to put the past behind us, pursuing a future in which the relationship between our two countries is defined not by our differences, but by the many things that we share as neighbors and friends: bonds of family, culture, commerce, and common humanity. This engagement includes the contributions of Cuban Americans, who have done so much for our country and who care deeply about their loved ones in Cuba.

Today we offer condolences to Fidel Castro's family, and our thoughts and prayers are with the Cuban people. In the days ahead, they will recall the past and also look to the future. As they do, the Cuban people must know that they have a friend and partner in the United States of America.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this statement.

Message to the Congress Transmitting an Alternative Pay Plan for Civilian Federal Employees
November 29, 2016

To the Congress of the United States:

I am transmitting an alternative plan for pay increases for civilian Federal employees covered by the General Schedule and certain other pay systems in January 2017. Title 5, United States Code, authorizes me to implement alternative pay plans for pay increases for civilian Federal employees covered by the General Schedule and certain other pay systems if, because of "national emergency or serious economic conditions affecting the general welfare," I view the adjustments that would otherwise take effect as inappropriate.

Civilian Federal employees made significant sacrifices as a result of the 3-year pay freeze

that ended in January 2014. Since the pay freeze ended, annual adjustments for civilian Federal employees have also been lower than private sector pay increases and statutory formulas for adjustments to the General Schedule for 2014 through 2016. However, we must maintain efforts to keep our Nation on a sustainable fiscal course. This is an effort that continues to require tough choices under current economic conditions.

Under current law, locality pay increases averaging 28.49 percent and costing $26 billion would go into effect in January 2017. Federal agency budgets cannot sustain such increases. In my August 31, 2016, alternative pay plan submission, I noted that the alternative plan for locality payments will be limited so that the total combined cost of the 1.0 percent across-the-board base pay increase and the varying locality pay increases will be 1.6 percent of basic payroll, consistent with the assumption in my 2017 Budget. Accordingly, I have determined that under the authority of section 5304a of title 5, United States Code, locality-based comparability payments for the locality pay areas established by the President's Pay Agent, in the amounts set forth in the attached table, shall become effective on the first day of the first applicable pay period beginning on or after January 1, 2017.

The locality-based comparability payments for the locality pay rates in the attached table are based on an allocation of 0.6 percent of payroll as indicated in my August 31, 2016, alternative pay plan for adjustments to the base General Schedule. These decisions will not materially affect our ability to attract and retain a well-qualified Federal workforce.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
November 29, 2016.

Remarks During a Meeting With the 2016 United States Nobel Prize Recipients
November 30, 2016

Well, as we near the end of the year, as many of you know, I've spent a lot of time promoting science and trying to encourage young people to get involved in those disciplines that have driven American innovation and American progress, as well as driven human progress. And one of the best ways for us to be able to do that is to recognize the achievements of some Americans who have received an extraordinary honor: These are our American Nobel Prize winners for this year.

They have done amazing work that for laypersons are sometimes hard to explain. But they are delving into the deepest aspects of matter. They are exploring our ability to manipulate molecules. We also have an economist who is helping to make sure that our market system and our contracts operate in ways that are fair and just, and help us to organize our economic system in ways that are more efficient, but also produce good results for everybody.

So we are incredibly proud of them. And I think it's just a reminder that one of the things that makes America unique is our ability to attract talent from all around the world to study at some of our greatest universities, and for us to, in very practical, reasoned, fact-based, empirical ways, figure out how we can make the world a slightly better place. And the work that's being done here is going to result in progress, some of which we can't anticipate yet, but will lead to new products, new materials, new technologies. And, most importantly, the work that these gentlemen have done are going to inspire a whole a new generation of scholars and scientists and researchers so that we know that this will continue into future generations.

And I'm very, very proud of them. And I'm hopeful that they have a wonderful time at the ceremony. I want to thank the Nobel Committee and the Ambassador of Sweden and all that they do to help to recognize outstanding human achievement, not just in our country, but around the world.

All right? Thank you, everybody.

And I will see you guys at the Christmas Party, all right? So get ready. [*Laughter*] Start jogging now. All right. Thank you, guys.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:46 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to 2016 U.S. Nobel Prize winners J. Fraser Stoddart for chemistry, F. Duncan M. Haldane and J. Michael Kosterlitz for physics, and Oliver Hart for economic sciences; and Sweden's Ambassador to the U.S. Björn Olof Lyrvall.

Remarks on Lighting the National Christmas Tree
December 1, 2016

Hello, everybody. Happy holidays to all of you. Eva Longoria, thank you for the wonderful hosting. Kelly Clarkson, we love. To everybody who is here tonight and everybody watching at home, it is now officially the time to light this tree. [*Applause*] Are you guys ready to count down? We're going to start from five. You ready? You sure? Ok, let's go. Five, four, three, two, one! [*Applause*] Hey! Merry Christmas, everybody!

[*At this point, the President exited the stage as the event continued. He later returned and made additional remarks as follows.*]

Merry Christmas, everybody! Well, thank you, Dylan, for that introduction and for all that you do for our parks down in Texas. I also want to thank Reverend Haggins for her beautiful invocation. And as we continue to celebrate the centennial of our national parks, I want to recognize our tremendous Secretary of the Interior, Sally Jewell; our National Park Service Director, Jonathan Jarvis; and all the rangers and staff from the Park Service and the National Park Foundation. Here's to another 100 years.

Let's give it up for Eva Longoria and this star-studded group we have here performing tonight: gold medalist Simone Manuel, Kelly Clarkson, Yolanda Adams, Garth Brooks and Trisha Yearwood, Chance the Rapper, the Lumineers, Marc Anthony, James and Kim Taylor. It's like a Christmas edition of Lollapalooza. [*Laughter*]

And this is just another example of why the holidays here at the White House are so special. Last week, I pardoned a turkey. [*Laughter*] Tonight we're lighting the National Christmas Tree. This one is easier because a tree does not move. It does not gobble. [*Laughter*] You just push a button, and it's electrified, which is exactly what you don't want to have happen at a turkey pardon. [*Laughter*] I thought that was funny, Michelle. [*Laughter*] Thankfully, both events have gone off without a hitch.

Along with celebrations like these, the holidays also offer us a time for reflection and perspective. And over these next few weeks, as we celebrate the birth of our Savior, as we retell the story of weary travelers, a star, shepherds, Magi, I hope that we also focus ourselves on the message that this child brought to this Earth some 2,000 years ago, a message that says we have to be our brother's keepers, our sister's keepers; that we have to reach out to each other, to forgive each other; to let the light of our good deeds shine for all; to care for the sick and the hungry and the downtrodden; and of course, to love one another, even our enemies, and treat one another the way we would want to be treated ourselves.

It's a message that grounds not just my family's Christian faith, but that of Jewish Americans, Muslim Americans, nonbelievers, Americans of all backgrounds. It's a message of unity and a message of decency and a message of hope that never goes out of style. And it's one that we all need very much today.

After 8 years as your President, I still believe that there's so much more that unites us than divides us. I've seen it in parents from every corner of this country just trying to give their kids a better shot. I've seen it in communities that come together and find common ground even in times of trial and times of tragedy. We see it in immigrants and refugees striving for

that most American of ideals: to better ourselves and our families. We see it in our troops who serve far from home during this holiday season, these outstanding men and women who go into harm's way to protect the Nation that we love and the freedoms that we hold dear: the freedom to vote and speak out and practice our faiths as we choose, the freedom to chart our own course as citizens and as a nation.

That is the America that I've seen as we've come back from the depths of an economic crisis to an economy on the move, as we've recovered from wars and natural tragedies. What I've seen is a big-hearted and hopeful and resilient people who look out for each other and who have each other's backs and who find strength in our differences and who keep moving forward knowing that we're all in this together.

Those are our values. That is who we are. That's who we will always be. And this is the 94th time that Americans have gathered to light our national tree. It's the eighth and final time for our family. Before we leave tonight, I just want to express what an incredible honor it has been to serve this Nation and to feel its warmth and to feel its generosity and how our family has been awed by America's goodness. And most of all, it has been so special to share these 8 years with all of you.

So, on behalf of Michelle and Malia, Sasha, Grandma—[*laughter*]—Bo, and Sunny, Merry Christmas, everybody. Happy holidays. May God bless you all, and may God bless these United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:41 p.m. on the Ellipse at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to actor Eva J. Longoria; musicians Kelly B. Clarkson, Yolanda Y. Adams, Garth Brooks, Trisha Yearwood, Chancelor J. "Chance the Rapper" Bennett, Marc Anthony, and James Taylor and his wife Kim; Dylan Carrejo, AmeriCorps alumnus, Texas Conservation Corps; Debra L. Haggins, university chaplain and pastor, Hampton University; and Simone Manuel, swimmer, 2016 U.S. Olympic Team. He also referred to his mother-in-law Marian Robinson.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Secretary-General–Designate António Manuel de Oliveira Guterres of the United Nations

December 2, 2016

President Obama. It is a great pleasure for me to be able to welcome the Secretary-General–designate Guterres to the Oval Office. He will be assuming a post that obviously has enormous influence and impact around the world. The good news is that he has an extraordinary reputation as someone who has led multilateral organizations at the highest level and has done so in ways that everybody recognizes he's extraordinarily effective.

Most recently his work with the U.N. High Commission on Refugees has been applauded for its effectiveness, its efficiency, and his ability to really concretely help people who are in extraordinary need. And the fact that, I think, all of us were pleasantly surprised by how quickly a consensus was achieved around Mr. Guterres's designation signifies the respect in which he's held all around the world.

From the perspective of the United States, the U.N. is a critical partner in almost everything that we do. It is a linchpin of the post–World War II order, and through Democratic and Republican administrations, our partnership with the United Nations has allowed us to help resolve conflicts, to provide development assistance where it's sorely needed, to tackle big transnational challenges like refugee flows or, more recently, like climate change. And at a time when those challenges are mounting and there's great uncertainty around the world, having an effective partner in the United Nations Secretary-General will be critically important.

So this meeting gives us an opportunity to share our ideas about where the Secretary-General–designate intends to take the U.N. and how the United States can work effectively with him.

I've emphasized to the current Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, how important the United States considers the U.N. but also how important it is, we believe, to make sure that the U.N. operates efficiently, that money is well spent, that we're doing everything we can to initiate the kinds of effective management practices that Mr. Guterres is known for, so that when we all have to be pinching pennies and being concerned about the needs around the world outstripping our resources, that the work we do in the U.N. is effective, concrete; that it's not just a forum for talking, but it's also a forum for doing.

And I have great confidence that our soon-to-be Secretary-General will be able to be an extraordinarily effective leader of that organization. And the United States looks forward to working with him.

So, congratulations and good luck.

Secretary-General–designate Guterres. Well, thank you very much, Mr. President. My visit also is to express my total commitment to work closely with the United States, with the present administration, also with the next administration.

We live in a dangerous world. We are all aware of that. We have seen a multiplication of conflicts. Old conflicts seem never to die. And it's true, the international community has lost a lot of its capacity to prevent and resolve conflicts. On the other hand, globalization that has been an extremely important driver of economic growth, the reduction of poverty in many parts of the world has also left people behind. And this has been the cause of unrest and instability in many parts of the world.

And the human rights agenda that is so dear to us all, we also see many difficulties in relation to it, when national sovereignty sometimes tends to make it difficult for human rights to be effective and to be promoted.

Now, in all these areas, I believe that the leadership of United States is absolutely crucial. And in all these areas, I believe that we need a U.N. that is more effective, more cost effective, more able to serve the people with a very strong reform-minded approach. And the U.S. has always been a driver for reforming the U.N., and I'm deeply committed to pursue that objective to make sure that the U.N. can be a positive partner in the efforts that the U.S. is leading—[*inaudible*].

President Obama. Thank you again. Congratulations. Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:13 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Statement on the Report of the Commission on Enhancing National Cybersecurity
December 2, 2016

In February of this year, I directed the creation of a nonpartisan Commission on Enhancing National Cybersecurity, charging it with assessing the current state of cybersecurity in our country and recommending bold, actionable steps that the Government, private sector, and the Nation as a whole can take to bolster cybersecurity in today's digital world. Yesterday the members of the Commission—leaders from industry and academia, many with experience in government—provided their findings and recommendations to me. And earlier today I met with the Commission's Chair, Tom Donilon, to discuss how we as a country can build on the Commission's work and enhance our cybersecurity over the coming years. I want to thank the Commission members for their hard work and for their thoughtful and detailed recommendations. I am confident that if we implement the Commission's recommendations, our economy, critical infrastructure, and national security will be better equipped to thrive in the coming years.

The Commission's report makes clear that cybersecurity is one of the greatest challenges

we face as a nation. That is why I have consistently made cybersecurity a top national security and economic security priority, reflected most recently by the Cybersecurity National Action Plan I announced in February and my 2017 budget, which called for a more than 35 percent increase in Federal cybersecurity resources.

During my administration, we have executed a consistent strategy focused on three priorities:

1. Raising the level of cybersecurity defenses in the public and private sectors;
2. Deterring and disrupting malicious cyber activity aimed at the United States or its allies; and
3. Effectively responding to and recovering from cybersecurity incidents when they occur.

To strengthen our cybersecurity defenses across the country, in 2013 we convened experts from industry, academia, and civil society to create the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Cybersecurity Framework. As the Commission notes, the framework has become the gold standard for cybersecurity risk management, and I wholeheartedly support the Commission's recommendations to expand its usage in the Federal Government, the private sector, and abroad. We encouraged the formation of information sharing and analysis organizations, worked with Congress to enact tailored liability protections for private sector entities that share threat information with the Government, and took steps to automate information sharing. As the Commission calls for, we launched public campaigns to promote cybersecurity awareness among consumers, including the "Lock Down Your Login" campaign encouraging consumers to better secure their identities online. We have given consumers more tools to secure their financial future by assisting victims of identity theft, improved the Government's payment security, and accelerated the transition to next-generation payment security. We have invested in cybersecurity research and development to lay the groundwork for stronger cyber defenses in the future. And I have clarified the roles and responsibilities of Federal agencies in responding to significant cyber incidents by issuing a new directive codifying 8 years of lessons learned from incident response.

To strengthen Government cybersecurity, we created the first-ever Federal Chief Information Security Officer and drove dramatic improvements in Federal agencies' use of strong authentication and in critical vulnerability patching. We have pushed to reduce the Federal Government's reliance on legacy technologies, proposing an innovative $3.1 billion fund to modernize costly and vulnerable information technology (IT) systems, a fund that the Commission proposes to expand. We updated the guidance for Federal agency IT management, cybersecurity, and privacy, introducing the kind of coordination that the Commission calls for. Agencies are increasingly centralizing their cybersecurity efforts and relying on the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for shared services like vulnerability detection, network discovery and monitoring, intrusion detection and prevention, and cybersecurity assessments of high-priority IT systems. Consolidating DHS' cybersecurity and infrastructure protection missions within a single DHS line agency—as my administration has proposed, and as the Commission recommends—would further strengthen DHS' ability to support Federal and critical infrastructure cybersecurity. Finally, consistent with the Commission's emphasis on improving the Nation's cybersecurity workforce, my administration has issued a comprehensive workforce strategy and has hired more than 6,000 new cybersecurity professionals in the Federal Government in 2016 alone.

As the Commission recognizes, we have championed the application of international law to cyberspace; promoted voluntary international norms of state behavior during peacetime, securing over 30 countries' commitment to these norms in the G–20 and other international fora; and committed to confidence-building measures to reduce escalation risk. We have secured commitments from China and other nations to oppose cyber-enabled

theft of intellectual property and business secrets for commercial gain, sought to modernize the Mutual Legal Assistance process, and submitted legislation to enable greater cross-border data sharing between law enforcement agencies, another effort the Commission strongly supports. We have developed additional tools and cyber capabilities to deter and disrupt malicious cyber activity aimed at the United States. Finally, we created the Cyber Threat Intelligence Integration Center to ensure that there is a single Governmentwide source for integrated intelligence assessments on cyber threats.

In total, the Commission's recommendations affirm the course that this administration has laid out, but make clear that there is much more to do and the next administration, Congress, the private sector, and the general public need to build on this progress. Deepening public-private cooperation will help us better protect critical infrastructure and respond to cyber incidents when they occur. Expanding the use of strong authentication to improve identity management will make all of us more secure online. Increasing investments in research and development will improve the security of products and technologies. Investing in human capital, education, and the productivity of the cybersecurity workforce will ensure that this country's best and brightest are helping us stay ahead of the cybersecurity curve. Continuing to prioritize and coordinate cybersecurity efforts across the Federal Government will ensure that this critical challenge remains a top national security priority. And furthering the promotion of international norms of responsible state behavior will ensure that the global community is able to confront the ever-evolving threats we face.

The Commission's recommendations are thoughtful and pragmatic. Accordingly, my administration strongly supports the Commission's work, and we will take additional action wherever possible to build on the work my administration has already undertaken and to make progress on its new recommendations before the end of my term. Importantly though, I believe that the next administration and the next Congress can benefit from the Commission's insights and should use the Commission's recommendations as a guide. I have asked the Commission to brief the President-elect's transition team at their earliest opportunity. Further, we must provide sufficient resources to meet the critical cybersecurity challenges called out in the Commission's report. Before Congress adjourns for the year, it must act to fully fund the urgent cybersecurity needs that my administration has identified in my 2017 budget and elsewhere, investing in areas such as securing Federal information technology systems, protecting critical infrastructure, and investing in our cybersecurity workforce.

As the Commission's report counsels, we have the opportunity to change the balance further in our favor in cyberspace, but only if we take additional bold action to do so. My administration has made considerable progress in this regard over the last 8 years. Now it is time for the next administration to take up this charge and ensure that cyberspace can continue to be the driver for prosperity, innovation, and change, both in the United States and around the world.

NOTE: The Commission on Enhancing National Cybersecurity's "Report on Securing and Growing the Digital Economy," dated December 1, was released by the Office of the Press Secretary with this statement. The statement referred to President-elect Donald J. Trump.

The President's Weekly Address
December 3, 2016

Hi, everybody. On the first day of my administration, I promised to restore science to its rightful place. I told you we would unleash American innovation and technology to tackle the health challenges of our time. Over the last 8 years, we've delivered on that promise in

many ways, both big and small, including, of course, providing health coverage to 20 million more Americans and making health care more affordable for all Americans.

Right now we have the chance to put our best minds to work one more time and in a big way. There's a bill in Congress that could help unlock a cure for Alzheimer's, end cancer as we know it, and help people seeking treatment for opioid addiction finally get the help they need. It's called the 21st Century Cures Act. It's an opportunity to save lives and an opportunity we just can't miss.

This bill would do a lot of good things at once. Let me tell you about five of them.

First, it will make real investments this year to combat the heroin and prescription drug epidemic that's plaguing so many of our communities. Drug overdoses now take more lives every year than traffic accidents, and deaths from opioid overdoses have nearly quadrupled since 1999. Under Obamacare, health plans in the marketplace have to include coverage for treatment, but there's more we need to do. For nearly a year, I've been calling for this investment so hundreds of thousands of Americans can get the treatment they need, and I'm glad Congress is finally getting it done.

The second thing the Cures Act does is make a significant investment in Joe Biden's Cancer Moonshot. In my State of the Union Address this year, I set a goal of making America the country that ends cancer once and for all, and I put the Vice President in charge of "mission control." This bill will allow us to invest in promising new therapies, in new ways to detect and prevent cancer, and to develop more vaccines for cancer just as we have them for measles or mumps. Joe's done an incredible job; this bill is a chance for Congress to do its part too.

Third, we'll be giving researchers the resources they need to help identify ways to treat, cure, and prevent all kinds of brain disorders: Alzheimer's, epilepsy, traumatic brain injury. And it also supports the Precision Medicine Initiative, an effort we started to bring doctors and data together to develop treatments and health care that one day can be tailored specifically for you. That can lead to some big breakthroughs.

Fourth, the Cures Act includes bipartisan mental health reforms, including important programs for suicide prevention.

And fifth, we're making sure the FDA incorporates patient voices—your voices—into the decisions they make as they develop drugs.

So that's what the 21st Century Cures Act is all about. Like all good legislation, it reflects compromise. This week, the House passed it overwhelmingly and in bipartisan fashion. The Senate will vote in the next few days, and I hope they'll do the same. I'll sign it as soon as it reaches my desk, because like a lot of you, I've lost people that I love deeply to cancer. I hear every day from Americans whose loved ones are suffering from addiction and other debilitating diseases. And I believe we should seize every chance we have to find cures as soon as possible. When it's your family, hope can't come soon enough.

Thanks, everybody, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:30 p.m. on December 2 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on December 3. In the address, the President referred to H.R. 34. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 2, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on December 3. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at the Kennedy Center Honors Reception
December 4, 2016

The President. Well, good evening, everybody.

Audience members. Good evening!

The President. On behalf of Michelle and myself, welcome to the White House. Over the past 8 years, this has always been one of our

favorite nights. And this year, I was especially looking forward to seeing how Joe Walsh cleans up. [*Laughter*] Pretty good. [*Laughter*]

I want to begin by once again thanking everybody who makes this wonderful evening possible, including David Rubenstein, the Kennedy Center Trustees—I'm getting a big echo back there—and the Kennedy Center President, Deborah Rutter. Give them a big round of applause.

We have some outstanding Members of Congress here tonight. And we are honored also to have Vicki Kennedy and three of President Kennedy's grandchildren with us here: Rose, Tatiana, and Jack. [*Applause*] Hey!

So the arts have always been part of life at the White House because the arts are always central to American life. And that's why, over the past 8 years, Michelle and I have invited some of the best writers and musicians, actors, dancers to share their gifts with the American people, and to help tell the story of who we are, and to inspire what's best in all of us. Along the way, we've enjoyed some unbelievable performances. This is one of the perks of the job that I will miss. [*Laughter*]

Thanks to Michelle's efforts, we've brought the arts to more young people, from hosting workshops where they learn firsthand from accomplished artists, to bringing "Hamilton" to students who wouldn't normally get a ticket to Broadway. And on behalf of all of us, I want to say thanks to my wife for having done such a tremendous job. [*Applause*] Yay! And she's always looked really good doing it. [*Laughter*] She does. [*Laughter*]

This is part of how we've tried to honor the legacy of President and Mrs. Kennedy. They understood just how vital art is to our democracy: that we need song and cinema and paintings and performance to help us challenge our assumptions, to question the way things are, and maybe inspire us to think about how things might be. The arts help us celebrate our triumphs, but also holds up a mirror to our flaws. And all of that deepens our understanding of the human condition. It helps us to see ourselves in each other. It helps to bind us together as a people.

As President Kennedy once said, "In serving his vision of the truth, the artist best serves his nation." Tonight we honor five amazing artists who have dedicated their lives to telling their truth and helping us to see our own.

At 8 years old, Mavis Staples climbed onto a chair in church, leaned into the microphone, raised her eyes upwards, and belted out the gospel. When people heard that deep, old soul coming out of that little girl, they wept, which, understandably, concerned her. [*Laughter*] But her mother told her: "Mavis, they're happy. Your singing makes them cry happy tears."

It was those early appearances on the South Side of Chicago—South Side!—[*laughter*]—with Mavis, her siblings, their father, Roebuck "Pops" Staples, that launched the legendary Staple Singers. Theirs was gospel with just a touch of country, a twist of the blues, little bit of funk. There was a little bit of sin with the salvation. [*Laughter*] And driven by Pops's reverbed guitar, Mavis's powerhouse vocals, and the harmonies that only family can make, the Staple Singers broke new ground with songs like "Uncloudy Day." They had some truth to tell. Inspired by Dr. King, Pops would tell his kids, "If he can preach it, we can sing it." And so they wrote anthems like "Freedom Highway" and "When Will We Be Paid," which became the soundtrack of the civil rights movement.

As a solo artist, Mavis has done it all and worked with just about everybody, from Bob Dylan to Prince to Jeff Tweedy. On albums like "We'll Never Turn Back" and "One True Vine," she still is singing for justice and equality and influencing a new generation of musicians and fans. And each soulful note, even in heartbreak and even in despair, is grounded in faith and in hope and the belief that there are better days yet to come. "These aren't just songs I'm singing to be moving my lips," she says. "I mean this." And we mean it too. Six decades on, nobody makes us feel "The Weight" like Mavis Staples. Give her a big round of applause.

Al Pacino calls the theater his "flashlight." [*Laughter*] It's how he finds himself, where he sees truth. And since Al first hit Broadway in

1969, his singular talent has been the gold standard for acting. A great playwright once compared the way Al inhabits his characters to the way Louis Armstrong played jazz. One director said that while "some actors play characters, Al Pacino becomes them." And we've all seen it. In the span of 5 years—you think about it—he became Serpico, became Sonny Wortzik, twice became Michael Corleone for, let's face it, what's got to be the two best movies of all time—[*laughter*]—became Tony Montana on screen, then became the owner of a couple of Tonys on the stage. [*Laughter*] And he's always been this way.

At 13, Al committed so profoundly to a role in the school play that when his character was supposed to get sick on stage, Al actually got sick on stage. [*Laughter*] I'm not sure how audiences felt about that. [*Laughter*] But later, when he played Richard III and Jackie Kennedy visited him backstage, the actor playing this self-absorbed king didn't even stand up to greet actual American royalty, which he says he still regrets. [*Laughter*]

Through it all, Al has always cared more for his flashlight than the spotlight. He says he's still getting used to the idea of being an icon. But his gift, for all the inspiration and intensity that he brings to his roles, is that he lets us into what his characters are feeling. And for that, we are extraordinarily grateful. Al Pacino.

In the late sixties, James Taylor got the chance to audition in front of Paul McCartney and George Harrison. Now, Ringo, I don't know if you were there, but this is a true story. [*Laughter*] "I was as nervous as a Chihuahua on methamphetamines"—[*laughter*]—is what James Taylor says. Which is exactly the kind of metaphor that makes him such a brilliant songwriter. [*Laughter*]

But if James has a defining gift, it is empathy. It's why he's been such a great friend to Michelle and myself. We're so grateful to him and Kim for their friendship over the years. It's why everybody from Carole King to Garth Brooks to Taylor Swift collaborates with him. It's what makes him among the most prolific and admired musicians of our time. In fact, James recently went through all his songs and kept coming across the same stories: songs about fathers and traffic jams, love songs, recovery songs. I really love this phrase: "hymns for agnostics." [*Laughter*] He says that in making music: "There's the idea of comforting yourself. There's also the idea of taking something that's untenable and internal and communicating it." And that's why it feels like James is singing only to you when he sings. It feels like he's singing about your life. The stories he tells and retells dwell on our most enduring and shared experiences. "Carolina on My Mind" is about where you grew up, even if you didn't grow up in Carolina. "Mean Old Man" is probably somebody you know. "Angels of Fenway"—well, actually, that's just about the Red Sox. So—[*laughter*]—if you're a White Sox fan, you don't love that song, but it's okay.

James is the consummate truthteller about a life that can leave us with more unresolved questions than satisfying answers, but holds so much beauty that you don't mind. And from his honesty about his own struggles with substance abuse to his decades of progressive activism, James Taylor has inspired people all over the world and helped America live up to our highest ideals. Thank you, James Taylor.

Without a preschool rivalry, we might not be honoring Martha Argerich. [*Laughter*] The story goes that when Martha was 2 years old, a little boy taunted her, saying, "I'll bet you can't play the piano!" [*Laughter*] So she sat down at the keys, remembered a piece her teacher had played, and played it flawlessly. By 8 years old, she had made her concert debut. By the time she was a teenager, she left her native Argentina to study in Vienna and won two major international competitions, launching one of the most storied and influential careers in classical music. That little boy lost his bet. [*Laughter*]

Martha combines unparalleled technical prowess with passion and glittering musicianship. From Bach to Schumann, she doesn't just play the piano, she possesses it. Martha can charge through a passage with astonishing power and speed and accuracy and, in the same performance, uncover the delicate beauty in each note. As a critic once wrote, "She is

an unaffected interpreter whose native language is music."

But what truly sets her apart and has cemented her place as one of the greatest pianists in modern history is her dogged commitment to her craft. In an age of often superficial connections, where people too often seek fame and recognition, Martha has been guided by one passion, and that is fidelity to the music. She can only be herself. And that is the truest mark of an artist. And the result is timeless, transcendent music for which we thank Martha Argerich.

And finally, there have been some interesting said—things said about this next group, including being called "one of rock's most contentiously dysfunctional families." [*Laughter*] So yes, it was unlikely that they'd ever get back together and that they'd call their reunion tour "Hell Freezes Over." [*Laughter*] I love that. But here's the thing: When you listen to the Eagles, you hear the exact opposite story, and that is perfect harmony.

You hear it in the crisp, overpowering a capella chords of "Seven Bridges Road," dueling guitar solos in "Hotel California," complex, funky riffs opening "Life in the Fast Lane." It's the sound not just of a California band, but one of America's signature bands, a supergroup whose "Greatest Hits" sold more copies in the United States than any other record in the 20th century. And the 20th century had some pretty good music. [*Laughter*]

So, here tonight, we have three of the Eagles: Don Henley, the meticulous, introspective songwriter with an unmistakable voice that soars above his drum set; Timothy Schmit, the bass player and topline of many of those harmonies; and Joe Walsh, who's as rowdy with a guitar lick as I'm told he once was in a hotel room. [*Laughter*] Twice. [*Laughter*] This is the White House though. [*Laughter*] And Michelle and I are about to leave. As I've said before, we want to get our security deposit back. So—[*laughter*].

But of course, the Eagles are also the one and only Glenn Frey. And we all wish Glenn was still here with us. We are deeply honored to be joined by his beautiful wife Cindy and their gorgeous children. Because the truth is that these awards aren't just about this reception or even the show we have this evening, which will be spectacular. The Kennedy Center Honors are about folks who spent their lives calling on us to think a little harder and feel a little deeper and express ourselves a little more bravely and maybe "take it easy" once in a while. And that is Glenn Frey, the driving force behind a band that owned a decade and did not stop there. We are all familiar with his legacy. And the music of the Eagles will always be woven into the fabric of our Nation.

So we are extraordinarily honored to be able to give thanks for the Eagles. And what's true for them is true for all of tonight's honorees: remarkable individuals who have created the soundtrack to our own lives: on road trips, in jukebox diners; folks who have mesmerized us on a Saturday night out at the movies or at a concert hall.

Mavis Staples, Al Pacino, James Taylor, Martha Argerich, the Eagles: Their legacies are measured not just in terms of works of art, but the lives they've touched, and creating a stronger and more beautiful America. They're artists who have served our Nation by serving their truth. And we're all better off for it.

So, before we transport ourselves to what I'm sure will be a spectacular evening, please join me in saluting our extraordinary 2016 Kennedy Center Honorees.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:28 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Victoria Reggie Kennedy, wife of former Sen. Edward M. Kennedy; Rose, Tatiana, and John B. Kennedy Schlossberg, grandchildren of former President John F. Kennedy; Yvonne and Pervis Staples, sister and brother of Kennedy Center Honoree Mavis Staples; playwright David Mamet; musicians Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr; Alex Ross, contributing music critic, the New Yorker magazine; and Deacon, Otis, and Taylor M. Frey, children of late Eagles founding member Glenn Frey.

Statement on the Ghost Ship Warehouse Fire in Oakland, California
December 5, 2016

Today our prayers go out to the people of Oakland, California, in the aftermath of this weekend's deadly warehouse fire, one of the worst fires in the State's history. While we still don't know the full toll of this disaster, we do know that an American community has been devastated, and many people—including young men and women with their whole futures ahead of them—have tragically lost their lives. I want to thank the dedicated first responders who have been working tirelessly for days to contain the situation, recover victims, and treat the wounded. My administration is in close contact with our State and local partners on the ground to make sure that authorities have everything they need as they continue response operations and investigate the cause of the fire. Oakland is one of the most diverse and creative cities in our country, and as families and residents pull together in the wake of this awful tragedy, they will have the unwavering support of the American people.

Statement on Releasing the "Report on the Legal and Policy Frameworks Guiding the United States' Use of Military Force and Related National Security Operations"
December 5, 2016

From President Lincoln's issuance of the Lieber Code during the Civil War to our nation's leadership at the Nuremberg Trials following World War II, the United States has a long history of emphasizing the development and enforcement of a framework under which war can be waged lawfully and effectively, with due regard for humanitarian considerations, and consistent with our national interests and values.

Consistent with this long tradition, since my first days in office I have underscored the importance of adhering to standards—including international legal standards—that govern the use of force. Far from eroding our nation's influence, I have argued, adherence to these standards strengthens us, just as it isolates those nations who do not follow such standards. Indeed, as I have consistently emphasized, what makes America truly remarkable is not the strength of our arms or our economy, but rather our founding values, which include respect for the rule of law and universal rights.

Decisions regarding war and peace are among the most important any President faces. It is critical, therefore, that such decisions are made pursuant to a policy and legal framework that affords clear guidance internally, reduces the risk of an ill-considered decision, and enables the disclosure of as much information as possible to the public, consistent with national security and the proper functioning of the Government, so that an informed public can scrutinize our actions and hold us to account. When I took office, our nation was already years into a new and different kind of conflict against enemies who do not wear uniforms or respect geographic boundaries and who disregard the legal principles of warfare. Recognizing the novelty of this threat and the difficult legal and policy questions it raised and continues to raise, the United States complies with all applicable domestic and international law in conducting operations against these enemies. And, over the course of my Administration, I directed my team to work continually to refine, clarify, and strengthen the standards and processes pursuant to which the United States conducts its national security operations.

This report details the results of these efforts. It describes, among other things, how my Administration has ensured that our uses of force overseas are supported by a solid domestic law framework and consistent with an international legal framework predicated on the concepts of sovereignty and self-defense

embedded in the United Nations Charter. And it describes how the United States has applied rules, practices, and policies long used in traditional warfare to this new type of conflict. In addition, the report recounts actions my Administration has taken to institutionalize a policy framework to ensure that, in carrying out certain critical operations, the United States not only meets but also in important respects exceeds the safeguards that apply as a matter of law in the course of an armed conflict—particularly in the areas of the preservation of civilian life, transparency, and accountability. For, as I have previously emphasized, to say that a military tactic is legal, or effective, is not to say that it is wise or moral in every instance.

To be sure, even with the release of this report today, there remains information about U.S. national security operations that we cannot disclose consistent with national security. Nor does this report address all conceivable legal aspects or justifications for the use of military force in every context or provide an exhaustive discussion of how the United States wages war. Rather, this report is intended to explain the domestic and international bases for the United States' ongoing use of military force overseas and to describe some of the key legal and policy frameworks my Administration has developed to govern such uses of force and related national security operations, such as detention, transfer, and interrogation operations. The report builds on a long line of public speeches and statements by members of my Administration that reflect my commitment to being as transparent as possible about how and in what circumstances the United States conducts national security operations. Even as working toward that degree of transparency can be challenging at times, it is ultimately critical to reinforcing the process of democratic decision-making, to demonstrating the legitimacy of our actions, and to reinforcing our relationships with our allies and partners.

Given the dynamic nature of today's security environment, the United States will no doubt continue to confront new issues as our nation's national security professionals work tirelessly to protect U.S. persons and interests. That is why, in conjunction with the release of this report, I am issuing a Presidential Memorandum that encourages future Administrations to build on this report and carry forward the principles of transparency it represents. In particular, the memorandum states that the National Security Council staff shall be asked, as appropriate, to update the report at least on an annual basis and to arrange for the report to be released to the public.

Through this report, I hope to enhance the public's understanding of the legal and policy principles that have guided U.S. national security operations, and to reinforce the fact that we defend our interests at home and around the world in a manner consistent with the laws, values, and traditions that are the source of our greatest strength.

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary as the Foreword to the report. The related memorandum is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Global Deployment of United States Combat-Equipped Armed Forces
December 5, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I am providing this supplemental consolidated report, prepared by my Administration and consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93–148), as part of my efforts to keep the Congress informed about deployments of U.S. Armed Forces equipped for combat.

MILITARY OPERATIONS IN SUPPORT OF U.S. COUNTERTERRORISM OBJECTIVES

In furtherance of U.S. counterterrorism efforts, the United States continues to work with partners around the globe, with a particular focus on the U.S. Central Command's and U.S. Africa Command's areas of responsibility. In this context, the United States has deployed U.S. combat-equipped forces to enhance the counterterrorism capabilities and support the counterterrorism operations of our partners and allies. Specific information about counterterrorism deployments to select countries is provided below, and a classified annex to this report provides further information.

Military Operations Against al-Qa'ida, the Taliban, and Associated Forces and in Support of Related U.S. Counterterrorism Objectives

Since October 7, 2001, U.S. Armed Forces, including special operations forces, have conducted counterterrorism combat operations in Afghanistan against al-Qa'ida, the Taliban, and associated forces. Since August 2014, these operations have targeted the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), which was formerly known as al-Qa'ida in Iraq. In support of these and other overseas operations, the United States has deployed combat-equipped forces to a number of locations in the U.S. Central, Pacific, European, Southern, and Africa Command areas of operation. Such operations and deployments have been reported previously, consistent with Public Law 107–40 and the War Powers Resolution, and operations and deployments remain ongoing. These operations, which the United States has carried out with the assistance of numerous international partners, have been successful in seriously degrading al-Qa'ida's capabilities and brought an end to the Taliban's rule in Afghanistan. If necessary, in response to terrorist threats, I will direct additional measures to protect U.S. citizens and interests. It is not possible to know at this time the precise scope or the duration of the deployments of U.S. Armed Forces necessary to counter terrorist threats to the United States.

Afghanistan. As I previously announced, U.S. Armed Forces have transitioned the lead for security to Afghan security forces while striking significant blows against al-Qa'ida's leadership and preventing Afghanistan from being used to launch attacks against the United States. A limited number of U.S. forces remain in Afghanistan for the purposes of, among other things, training, advising, and assisting Afghan forces; conducting and supporting counterterrorism operations against the remnants of core al-Qa'ida and against ISIL; and taking appropriate measures against those who directly threaten U.S. and coalition forces in Afghanistan or provide direct support to al-Qa'ida. The United States remains in an armed conflict, including against the Taliban, and active hostilities remain ongoing.

The mission to help train, advise, and assist the Afghan National Security Forces and Afghan ministries and institutions continues through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization–led Resolute Support Mission. The United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2189, dated December 12, 2014, which welcomed the Resolute Support Mission and underscored the importance of continued international support for the stability of Afghanistan.

The Force Management Level for U.S. Armed Forces in Afghanistan currently is 9,800. Effective January 1, 2017, the Force Management Level for Afghanistan will be 8,448. (The actual number of U.S. military personnel may exceed the Force Management Level due to certain forces being excluded from counting against the Force Management Level; for example, incoming and outgoing forces that overlap during rotations of units do not count against the Force Management Level.)

Iraq and Syria. As part of a comprehensive strategy to degrade and ultimately defeat ISIL, U.S. Armed Forces are conducting a systematic campaign of airstrikes and other necessary operations against ISIL forces in Iraq and Syria. United States Armed Forces are also conducting airstrikes and other necessary operations against al-Qa'ida in Syria. In Iraq, U.S. Armed Forces are advising and coordinating

with Iraqi forces and providing training, equipment, communications support, intelligence support, and other support to select elements of the Iraqi security forces, including Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga forces. Additionally, small teams of U.S. special operations forces have deployed to Syria to help coordinate U.S. operations with indigenous ground forces conducting operations against ISIL. The Force Management Level for U.S. Armed Forces in Iraq currently is 5,262. The Force Management Level for U.S. Armed Forces in Syria is 300.

Actions in Iraq are being undertaken in coordination with the Government of Iraq, and in conjunction with coalition partners.

Turkey. Strike and combat support aircraft, with associated U.S. military personnel, remain deployed to Turkey to support counter-ISIL operations and to support the defense of Turkey, at the Turkish government's request.

Somalia. In Somalia, U.S. forces continue to counter the terrorist threat posed by al-Qa'ida and its Somalia-based associated force, al-Shabaab. United States forces also advise, assist, and occasionally accompany regional forces, including Somali and African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) forces, during counterterrorism operations. United States forces also conducted strikes in defense of U.S. forces, and in defense of partnered Somali and AMISOM forces, on June 21, July 20, July 31, August 31, September 25, and September 28, 2016.

Yemen. The U.S. military also has been working closely with the Government of Yemen to operationally dismantle and ultimately eliminate the terrorist threat posed by al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). A small number of U.S. military personnel are deployed in Yemen to support operations against AQAP, including support for operations to capture AQAP leaders and key personnel. Our efforts have resulted in direct action against a limited number of AQAP operatives and senior leaders in that country who posed a terrorist threat to the United States and our interests. United States forces have conducted a number of airstrikes against AQAP combatants in Yemen since my June 13, 2016, update report, including on July 1, July 4, July 8, July 16, August 4, August 24, August 30, September 4, September 20, September 22, September 23, September 29, October 6, October 18, October 21, November 20, November 24, and November 30, 2016.

Djibouti. United States forces continue to partner with Government of Djibouti authorities, which have permitted use of Djiboutian territory for basing of U.S. forces. United States forces remain deployed to Djibouti, including for purposes of posturing for counterterrorism operations in the Horn of Africa and Arabian Peninsula and contingency support for embassy security augmentation in East Africa, as required.

Libya. United States forces continue to conduct airstrikes against ISIL targets in Libya, including in support of efforts by forces aligned with the Libyan Government of National Accord to recapture the city of Sirte from ISIL. These airstrikes are conducted at the request of and with the consent of the Government of National Accord.

Cuba. Combat-equipped forces, deployed since January 2002 to the Naval Base, Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, continue to conduct humane and secure detention operations for detainees held at Guantánamo Bay under the authority provided by the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force (Public Law 107–40), as informed by the law of war. There were 59 such detainees as of the date of this report.

Jordan. At the request of the Government of Jordan, approximately 2,300 U.S. military personnel are deployed to Jordan to support counter-ISIL operations and the security of Jordan and to promote regional stability. These forces will remain in Jordan, in full coordination with the Government of Jordan, until the security situation becomes such that they are no longer needed.

Military Operations in Niger in Support of U.S. Counterterrorism Objectives

United States military personnel in Niger continue to provide support for counterterrorism intelligence collection and to facilitate intelligence sharing with French forces conduct-

ing counterterrorism operations in the Sahel and with other partners in the region. The total number of U.S. military personnel deployed to Niger is approximately 575.

Military Operations in Cameroon in Support of U.S. Counterterrorism Objectives

Approximately 285 U.S. military personnel are deployed to Cameroon, with the consent of the Government of Cameroon, to conduct airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance operations in the region. These forces are equipped with weapons for the purpose of providing their own force protection and security, and they will remain in Cameroon until their support is no longer needed.

MILITARY OPERATIONS RELATED TO THE LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY

United States military personnel with appropriate combat equipment remain deployed to various countries in the central Africa region to serve as advisors to regional forces of the African Union Regional Task Force that are working to apprehend or remove Joseph Kony and other senior Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) leaders from the battlefield and to protect local populations. Additional information about military operations related to the LRA is provided in the classified annex.

MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE RED SEA

As I previously reported, on October 12, 2016, U.S. forces conducted missile strikes on radar facilities in Houthi-controlled territory in Yemen. These strikes were in response to antiship cruise missile attacks perpetrated by Houthi insurgents on U.S. Navy warships in the international waters of the Red Sea on October 9 and October 12.

MILITARY OPERATIONS IN EGYPT

Approximately 700 military personnel are assigned to or supporting the U.S. contingent of the Multinational Force and Observers, which have been present in Egypt since 1981.

MILITARY OPERATIONS RELATED TO THE SECURITY OF U.S. CITIZENS AND PROPERTY IN SOUTH SUDAN

As I reported in July 2016, U.S. military personnel with appropriate combat equipment are deployed to South Sudan to support the security of U.S. citizens and property in South Sudan, including of our Embassy in Juba. These forces will remain in South Sudan, in full coordination with the Government of South Sudan, until the security situation becomes such that they are no longer needed. The forces that were deployed to Uganda to support this mission have redeployed to Djibouti or their home stations in Europe.

U.S./NATO OPERATIONS IN KOSOVO

The U.N. Security Council authorized Member States to establish a NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR) in Resolution 1244 on June 10, 1999. The original mission of KFOR was to monitor, verify, and, when necessary, enforce compliance with the Military Technical Agreement between NATO and the then-Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (now Serbia), while maintaining a safe and secure environment. Today, KFOR deters renewed hostilities in cooperation with local authorities, bilateral partners, and international institutions. The principal military tasks of KFOR forces are to help maintain a safe and secure environment and to ensure freedom of movement throughout Kosovo. The U.S. contribution to KFOR is approximately 774 U.S. military personnel out of the total strength of approximately 4,475 personnel.

I have directed the participation of U.S. Armed Forces in all of these operations pursuant to my constitutional and statutory authority as Commander in Chief and as Chief Executive (including the authority to carry out Public Law 107–40 and other statutes), as well as my constitutional and statutory authority to conduct the foreign relations of the United

States. Officials of my Administration and I communicate regularly with the leadership and other Members of Congress with regard to these deployments and we will continue to do so.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Orrin G. Hatch, President pro tempore of the Senate.

Remarks to United States Troops at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida
December 6, 2016

The President. Hello, MacDill! Thank you so much!

Well, first of all, have you noticed this coincidence? On the scoreboard, it says 44 to 44. That happens to be—oh. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. We love you!

The President. I love you too. I do.

I—to General Votel, General Thomas, and most importantly, to all of you: I am here for a very simple reason, and that is just to say thank you, on behalf of the American people. We have been so reliant on the outstanding work that has been done by SOCOM and CENTCOM, the extraordinary leadership from the highest general down to the person who's just started. I have been consistently in awe of your performance and the way that you've carried out your mission.

As some of you remember, I was here 2 years ago. I want to thank, in addition to some of the outstanding leadership team, a couple of special folks to mention: Colonel April Vogel, Chief Master Sergeant Melanie Noel, all your senior enlisted leaders. Give them a big round of applause.

I know that, obviously, we've got a lot of Air Force here. We've got Central Command. We've got Special Operations Command. We've got Army, Navy, Marines. We've got our DOD civilians, and we've got spouses, partners, sons, daughters——

Audience member. Family!

The President. What's that?

Audience member. Family.

The President. I was just mentioning them. [*Laughter*] You guys, I was getting to that. [*Laughter*] We've got amazing military families here who are sacrificing alongside of you every single day. Give them a big round of applause.

So I just had the chance to meet with General Thomas and some of the extraordinary personnel from across U.S. Special Operations Command. I'm going to go give a big policy speech right after I talk to you. The main thing I want to do is just shake your hands. And I'm going to try to shake as many hands as I can.

I know you're marking an important anniversary. For 75 years—from World War II through Korea, the Cuban missile crisis, Vietnam, the Gulf war, the Afghan and Iraq wars—the men and women of this base have always stepped up when we needed them most. So, on behalf of the entire country, I want to wish you a happy 75th anniversary.

For Michelle and myself, our—the lease is running out on our apartment. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. Renew it!

The President. No, I can't. [*Laughter*] So I just want to get my security deposit back. [*Laughter*] But it has been the privilege and honor of a lifetime to be your Commander in Chief, the Commander in Chief of the finest fighting force the world has ever known. You are the best, because we have the best people.

You and your families have inspired us. We've been inspired by your patriotism, for stepping forward, for volunteering, for dedicating yourself to a life of service. We've been inspired by your devotion, your willingness to sacrifice for all of us. We've been inspired by your example. At a time when sometimes the country seems so divided, you remind us that, as Americans, we're all part of one team. We take care of each other. And you remind us of what patriotism really means.

So I just want to say thank you to all of you. You are going to continue with your mission, but I will tell you that Michelle and I, having had the experience and the honor of working with you, are going to make it one of our missions as civilians to support you in every way that we can.

God bless you. God bless our troops. God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:34 p.m. in the basketball gym. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Joseph L. Votel III, USA, commander, U.S. Central Command; Gen. Raymond A. Thomas III, USA, commander, U.S. Special Operations Command; and Col. April D. Vogel, USAF, commander, and CMS Melanie K. Noel, USAF, command chief master sergeant, Sixth Air Mobility Wing, MacDill Air Force Base.

Remarks on United States Counterterrorism Strategy at MacDill Air Force Base
December 6, 2016

The President. Thank you. Everybody, please have a seat. Have a seat. Well, thank you so much. Good afternoon, everybody.

Audience members. Good afternoon.

The President. I was just told that was going to be the last "Hail to the Chief" on the road, and it got me kind of sentimental. I want to, first and foremost, say thanks to all of you. Just before I came here, I was able to visit with some of the men and women from MacDill Air Force Base, Central Command, our Special Operations Command to thank them for their extraordinary service. And so, to you and your families and to the extended family of American servicemembers, let me say that our Nation owes you an unbelievable debt of gratitude. We are grateful for you, and we will be praying for you over the holidays. So—[*applause*].

As you know all too well, your mission—and the course of history—was changed after the 9/11 attacks. By the time I took office, the United States had been at war for 7 years. For 8 years that I've been in office, there has not been a day when a terrorist organization or some radicalized individual was not plotting to kill Americans. And on January 20, I will become the first President of the United States to serve two full terms during a time of war. Now, we did not choose this fight, but once it came to us, the world saw the measure of our resolve.

The most solemn responsibility for any President is keeping the American people safe. In carrying out that duty, I have sent men and women into harm's way. I've visited troops around the globe. I have met our wounded warriors, and I've grieved with Gold Star families. I know better than most that it is because of your service and your sacrifice that we have been able, during these 8 years, to protect our homeland, to strike crippling blows against terrorist networks, and fortify our friends and our allies. So today I'd like to reflect on that work and talk about the foundation that we will leave for the next administration.

I came to this office with a set of core convictions that have guided me as Commander in Chief. I believe that the United States military can achieve any mission; that we are, and must remain, the strongest fighting force the world has ever known. I believe that we must never hesitate to act when necessary, including unilaterally when necessary, against any imminent threats to our people. But I've also insisted that it is unwise and unsustainable to ask our military to build nations on the other side of the world or resolve their internal conflicts, particularly in places where our forces become a magnet for terrorists and insurgencies. Instead, it's been my conviction that even as we focus relentlessly on dismantling terrorist networks like Al Qaida and ISIL, we should ask allies to do their share in the fight, and we should strengthen local partners who can provide lasting security.

And these convictions guided the policies we pursued both in Iraq and Afghanistan. When I took office, the United States was focused overwhelmingly on Iraq, where nearly 150,000 American troops had spent years fighting an insurgency and helping to build a democratic government. Meanwhile, Al Qaida had

regrouped in the border region of Afghanistan and Pakistan and was actively planning attacks against our homeland. So we brought nearly 150,000 troops home from Iraq, consistent with the status of forces agreement negotiated by the previous administration, and we surged our efforts along with our allies in Afghanistan, which allowed us to focus on dismantling Al Qaida and give the Afghan Government the opportunity to succeed.

And this focus on Al Qaida—the most dangerous threat to the United States at the time—paid dividends. Today, by any measure, core Al Qaida—the organization that hit us on 9/11—is a shadow of its former self. Plots directed from within Afghanistan and Pakistan have been consistently disrupted. Its leadership has been decimated. Dozens of terrorist leaders have been killed. Usama bin Laden is dead. And importantly, we have built a counterterrorism capability that can sustain this pressure against any terrorist network in South Asia that might threaten the United States of America. That was because of the work of our outstanding servicemembers.

Moreover, that early decision to strengthen our efforts in Afghanistan allowed us to build the capacity of Afghans to secure and defend their own country. So today, there are less than 10,000 American troops in Afghanistan. Instead of being in the lead against the Taliban, Americans are now supporting 320,000 Afghan security forces who are defending their communities and supporting our counterterrorism efforts.

Now, I don't want to paint too rosy a picture. The situation in Afghanistan is still tough. War has been a part of life in Afghanistan for over 30 years, and the United States cannot eliminate the Taliban or end violence in that country. But what we can do is deny Al Qaida a safe haven, and what we can do is support Afghans who want a better future, which is why we have worked not only with their military, but we've backed a unity Government in Kabul. We've helped Afghan girls go to school. We've supported investments in health care and electricity and education. You have made a difference in Afghanistan, and America is safer for it.

Of course, the terrorist threat was never restricted to South Asia or to Afghanistan or Pakistan. Even as Al Qaida has been decimated in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the threat from terrorists metastasized in other parts of the Middle East and North Africa. And most dangerously, we saw the emergence of ISIL, the successor to Al Qaida in Iraq, which fights as both a terrorist network and an insurgency.

There's been a debate about ISIL that's focused on whether a continued U.S. troop presence in Iraq back in 2011 could have stopped the threat of ISIL from growing. And as a practical matter, this was not an option. By 2011, Iraqis wanted our military presence to end, and they were unwilling to sign a new status of forces agreement to protect our troops from prosecution if they were trying to defend themselves in Iraq.

In addition, maintaining American troops in Iraq at the time could not have reversed the forces that contributed to ISIL's rise: a government in Baghdad that pursued a sectarian agenda, a brutal dictator in Syria who lost control of large parts of the country, social media that reached a global pool of recruits, and a hollowing out of Iraq's security forces, which were ultimately overrun in Mosul in 2014. In fact, American troops, had they stayed there, would have lacked legal protections and faced a choice between remaining on bases or being drawn back into a sectarian conflict against the will of Iraq's elected Government or Iraq's local populations.

But circumstances changed. When ISIL made substantial gains in—first in Mosul and then in other parts of the country, then suddenly, Iraqis reached out once again for help. And in shaping our response, we refused to repeat some of the mistakes of the 2003 invasion that have helped to give rise to the organization that became ISIL in the first place.

We conditioned our help on the emergence of a new Iraqi Government and Prime Minister that was committed to national unity and committed to working with us. We built an international coalition of nearly 70 nations, in-

cluding some of Iraq's neighbors. We surged our intelligence resources so that we could better understand the enemy. And then we took the fight to ISIL in both Iraq and Syria, not with American battalions, but with local forces backed by our equipment and our advisers and, importantly, our special forces. In that campaign, we have now hit ISIL with over 16,000 airstrikes. We have equipped and trained tens of thousands of partners on the ground.

And today, the results are clear: ISIL has lost more than half its territory; ISIL has lost control of major population centers; its morale is plummeting, its recruitment is drying up, its commanders and external plotters are being taken out, and local populations are turning against it.

As we speak, ISIL faces an offensive on Mosul from Iraqi troops and coalition support. That's the largest remaining city that it controls. Meanwhile, in Syria, ISIL's self-declared capital in Raqqa is being squeezed. We've attacked ISIL's financial lifeline, destroying hundreds of millions of dollars of oil and cash reserves. The bottom line is, we are breaking the back of ISIL. We're taking away its safe havens. And we've accomplished all this at a cost of $10 billion over 10—over 2 years, which is the same amount that we used to spend in 1 month at the height of the Iraq war.

So the campaign against ISIL has been relentless. It has been sustainable. It has been multilateral. And it demonstrates a shift in how we've taken the fight to terrorists everywhere from South Asia to the Sahel. Instead of pushing all of the burden onto American ground troops, instead of trying to mount invasions wherever terrorists appear, we've built a network of partners: in Libya, where U.S. airpower has helped local militias dislodge a dangerous ISIL cell; in Mali, where U.S. logistics and intelligence support helped our French allies roll back Al Qaida branches there; in Somalia, where U.S. operations support an African Union–led force and international peacekeepers; and in Yemen, where years of targeted strikes have degraded Al Qaida in the Peninsula.

And these offensive efforts have buttressed a global effort to make it harder for terrorist networks to breach our defenses and spread their violent ideologies. Working with European allies who have suffered terrible attacks, we've strengthened intelligence sharing and cut in half the flow of foreign fighters to ISIL. We've worked with our tech sector to support efforts to push back on terrorist messages on social media that motivate people to kill. A recent study shows that ISIL's propaganda has been cut in half. We've launched a Global Engagement Center to empower voices that are countering ISIL's perversion of Islam, and we're working closely with Muslim-majority partners from the Gulf to Southeast Asia.

This is your work. We should take great pride in the progress that we've made over the last 8 years. That's the bottom line.

No foreign terrorist organization has successfully planned and executed an attack on our homeland. And it's not because they didn't try. Plots have been disrupted. Terrorists have been taken off the battlefield. And we've done this even as we drew down nearly 180,000 troops in harm's way in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, there are just 15,000.

New partnerships have been built. We've respected the rule of law. We've enlisted our values in this fight. And all of this progress is due to the service of millions of Americans like you: in intelligence and in law enforcement, in homeland security, in diplomacy, in the Armed Services of the United States of America. It's thanks to you. [*Applause*] Thanks to you.

Now, to say that we've made progress is not to say that the job is done. We know that a deadly threat persists. We know that in some form this violent extremism will be with us for years to come. In too many parts of the world, especially in the Middle East, there has been a breakdown of order that's been building for decades, and it's unleashed forces that are going to take a generation to resolve. Long-term corruption has rotted too many nation-states from within. Governance is collapsing. Sectarian conflicts rage. A changing climate is increasing competition for food and water. And false prophets are peddling a vision of Islam that is

irreconcilable with tolerance and modernity and basic science. And in fact, every one of these trends is at play inside of Syria today.

And what complicates the challenge even more is the fact that for all of our necessary focus on fighting terrorists overseas, the most deadly attacks on the homeland over the last 8 years have not been carried out by operatives with sophisticated networks or equipment, directed from abroad. They've been carried out by homegrown and largely isolated individuals who were radicalized online.

These deranged killers can't inflict the sort of mass casualties that we saw on 9/11, but the pain of those who lost loved ones in Boston, in San Bernardino, in Fort Hood, and Orlando, that pain continues to this day. And in some cases, it has stirred fear in our populations and threatens to change how we think about ourselves and our lives.

So, while we've made it much more difficult—you have made it much more difficult—to carry out an attack approaching the scale of 9/11, the threat will endure. We will not achieve the kind of clearly defined victory comparable to those that we won in previous wars against nations. We won't have a scene of the Emperor of Japan and Douglas MacArthur in a surrender. And the reason we won't have that is because technology makes it impossible to completely shield impressionable minds from violent ideologies. And somebody who is trying to kill and willing to be killed is dangerous, particularly when we live in a country where it's very easy for that person to buy a very powerful weapon.

So, rather than offer false promises that we can eliminate terrorism by dropping more bombs or deploying more and more troops or fencing ourselves off from the rest of the world, we have to take a long view of the terrorist threat, and we have to pursue a smart strategy that can be sustained.

In the time remaining, let me suggest what I think should guide this approach. First of all, a sustainable counterterrorism strategy depends on keeping the threat in perspective. The terrorist threat is real, and it is dangerous. But these terrorists want to cast themselves as the vanguard of a new world order. They are not. They are thugs, and they are murderers, and they should be treated that way. Now, fascism threatened to overrun the entire world, and we had to wage total war in response. Communism threatened not over to—only to overturn a world order, but threatened nuclear holocaust, so we had to build armaments and alliances to contain it. Today's terrorists can kill innocent people, but they don't pose an existential threat to our Nation, and we must not make the mistake of elevating them as if they do. That does their job for them. It makes them more important and helps them with recruitment.

A second and related point is that we cannot follow the path of previous great powers who sometimes defeated themselves through overreach. By protecting our homeland while drawing down the number of troops serving in harm's way overseas, we helped save resources, but more importantly, we saved lives. I can tell you, during the course of my 8 years, that I have never shied away from sending men and women into danger where necessary. It's always the hardest decision I make, but it's one that I've made where the security of the American people is at stake. And I have seen the cost. I have held the hands of our wounded warriors at Walter Reed. I have met the caskets of the fallen at Dover. And that's why I make no apologies for only sending our troops into harm's way when there is a clear mission that is achievable and when it is absolutely necessary.

Number three, we need the wisdom to see that upholding our values and adhering to the rule of law is not a weakness; in the long term, it is our greatest strength. The whole objective of these terrorists is to scare us into changing the nature of who we are and our democracy. And the fact is, people and nations do not make good decisions when they are driven by fear. These terrorists can never directly destroy our way of life, but we can do it for them if we lose track of who we are and the values that this Nation was founded upon.

And I always remind myself that as Commander in Chief, I must protect our people,

but I also swore an oath to defend our Constitution. And over these last 8 years, we have demonstrated that staying true to our traditions as a nation of laws advances our security as well as our values.

We prohibited torture, everywhere, at all times, and that includes tactics like waterboarding. And at no time has anybody who has worked with me told me that doing so has cost us good intelligence. When we do capture terrorists, despite all the political rhetoric about the need to strip terrorists of their rights, our interrogation teams have obtained valuable information from terrorists without resorting to torture, without operating outside the law. Our Article III courts have delivered justice faster than military trials. And our prisons have proven more than capable of holding the most dangerous terrorists.

Consider the terrorists who have been captured, lawfully interrogated, and prosecuted in civilian courts: Faisal Shahzad, who tried to set off a car bomb in Times Square; Dzohkar Tsarneyev, the Boston Marathon bomber; Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, the so-called underwear bomber. American juries and judges have determined that none of these people will know freedom again. But we did it lawfully. And the wheels of justice right now are turning for others: terrorists like Ahmed Warsame, an al-Shabaab commander, and Abu Khatalla, accused leader of the Benghazi attacks. We can get these terrorists and stay true to who we are.

And in fact, our success in dealing with terrorists through our justice system reinforces why it is past time to shut down the detention facility at Guantanamo. This is not just my opinion, it's the opinion of many military leaders. During my administration, we have responsibly transferred over 175 detainees to foreign governments, with safeguards to reduce the risk of them returning to the battlefield. And we've cut the population in Gitmo from 242 to 59. The politics of fear has led Congress to prevent any detainees from being transferred to prisons in the United States, even though, as we speak, we imprison dangerous terrorists in our prisons, and we have even more dangerous criminals in all of our prisons across the country; even though our allies oftentimes will not turn over a terrorist if they think that terrorist could end up in Gitmo; even though groups like ISIL use Gitmo in their propaganda. So we're wasting hundreds of millions of dollars to keep fewer than 60 people in a detention facility in Cuba. That's not strength. Until Congress changes course, it will be judged harshly by history, and I will continue to do all that I can to remove this blot on our national honor.

Number four, we have to fight terrorists in a way that does not create more terrorists. For example, in a dangerous world, terrorists seek out places where it's often impossible to capture them or to count on local governments to do so. And that means the best option for us to get those terrorists becomes a targeted strike. So we have taken action under my command, including with drones, to remove terrorists from the battlefield, which protects our troops and has prevented real threats to the American people.

Now, under rules that I put in place and that I made public, before any strike is taken outside of a war zone, there must be near certainty that no civilians will be killed or injured. And while nothing is certain in any strike, and we have acknowledged that there are tragic instances where innocents have been killed by our strikes, this is the highest standard that we can set. Nevertheless, we still have critics who suggest that these strikes are wrong. And I say to them, you have to weigh the alternatives. Drone strikes allow us to deny terrorists a safe haven without airstrikes, which are less precise, or invasions that are much more likely to kill innocent civilians as well as American servicemembers.

So the actions that we've taken have saved lives at home and abroad. But the point is, is that we do have to be careful to make sure that when we take actions, we're not alienating local populations, because that will serve as recruitment for new terrorists.

Number five, transparency and accountability serve our national security not just in times of peace, but more importantly, in times of conflict. And that's why we've made public

information about which terrorist organizations we're fighting and why we're fighting them. We've released assessments of noncombatants killed in our operations, taken responsibility when mistakes are made. We've declassified information about interrogation methods that were wrong so we learn from past mistakes. And yesterday I directed our Government for the first time to release a full description of the legal and policy frameworks that guide our military operations around the world.

This public information allows for a more informed public debate, and it provides a potential check on unfettered executive power. The power of the Presidency is awesome, but it is supposed to be bound by you, our citizens. But here's the thing: That information doesn't mean anything—it doesn't work—if the people's representatives in Congress don't do their jobs, if they're not paying attention.

Right now we are waging war under authorities provided by Congress over 15 years ago—15 years ago. I had no gray hair 15 years ago. [*Laughter*] Two years ago, I asked Congress, let's update the authorization, provide us a new authorization for the war against ISIL, reflecting the changing nature of the threats, reflecting the lessons that we've learned from the last decade. So far, Congress has refused to take a vote.

Democracies should not operate in a state of permanently authorized war. That's not good for our military; it's not good for our democracy. And by the way, part of the reason that's dangerous is because today, with our outstanding, All-Volunteer Force, only 1 percent of the population is actually fighting, which means that you are carrying the burden; which means that it is important for us to know what it is that we're doing and have to explain what we are doing to the public, because it becomes too easy to just send 1 percent of the population out to do things even if they're not well thought through.

If a threat is serious enough to require the sacrifice of our men and women in uniform, then Members of Congress should at least have the courage to make clear where they stand: not on the sidelines, not on cable TV shows, but by fulfilling their constitutional duty and authorizing the use of force against the threats that we face today. That's how democracies are supposed to work.

Number six, alongside our outstanding military work, we have to draw upon the strength of our diplomacy. Terrorists would love to see us walk away from the type of work that builds international coalitions and ends conflicts and stops the spread of deadly weapons. It would make life easier for them; it would be a tragic mistake for us.

Just think about what we've done these last 8 years without firing a shot. We've rolled back Iran's nuclear program. That's not just my assessment, that's the assessment of Israeli intelligence, even though they were opposed to the deal. We've secured nuclear materials around the globe, reducing the risk that they fall into the hands of terrorists. We've eliminated Syria's declared chemical weapons program. All of these steps have helped keep us safe and helped keep our troops safe. Those are the result of diplomacy. And sustained diplomatic efforts, no matter how frustrating or difficult they sometimes appear, are going to be required to resolve the conflicts roiling in the Middle East, from Yemen to Syria to Israel and Palestine. And if we don't have strong efforts there, the more you will be called upon to clean up after the failure of diplomacy.

Similarly, any long-term strategy to reduce the threat of terrorism depends on investments that strengthen some of these fragile societies. Our generals, our commanders understand this. This is not charity. It's fundamental to our national security. A dollar spent on development is worth a lot more than a dollar spent fighting a war.

This is how we prevent conflicts from starting in the first place. This is how we can ensure that peace is lasting, after we've fought. It's how we stop people from falling prey to extremism, because children are going to school, and they can think for themselves, and families can feed themselves and aren't desperate, and communities are not ravaged by diseases, and countries are not devastated by climate changes.

As Americans, we have to see the value of empowering civil societies so that there are outlets for people's frustrations, and we have to support entrepreneurs who want to build businesses instead of destroying. We have to invest in young people because the areas that are generating terrorists are typically having a huge youth bulge, what makes—which makes them more dangerous. And there are times where we need to help refugees who have escaped the horrors of war in search of a better life. Our military recognizes that these issues of governance and human dignity and development are vital to our security. It's central to our plans in places like Afghanistan and Iraq. Let's make sure that this wisdom is reflected in our budgets as well.

And finally, in this fight, we have to uphold the civil liberties that define us. Terrorists want us to turn on one another. And while defeating them requires us to draw upon the enormous capabilities of all of our Government, we have to make sure changes in how we address terrorists are not abused. This is why, for example, we've made extensive reforms in how we gather intelligence around the world, increasing oversight, placing new restrictions on the Government's ability to retain and search and use certain communications so that people trust us, and that way, they cooperate and work with us.

We don't use our power to indiscriminately read e-mails or listen to phone calls, just targeted at folks who might be trying to do us harm. We use it to save lives. And by doing so, by maintaining these civil liberties, we sustain the confidence of the American people and we get the cooperation of our allies more readily. Protecting liberty, that's something we do for all Americans and not just some.

We are fighting terrorists who claim to fight on behalf of Islam. But they do not speak for over a billion Muslims around the world, and they do not speak for American Muslims, including many who wear the uniform of the United States of America's military.

If we stigmatize good, patriotic Muslims, that just feeds the terrorists' narrative. It fuels the same false grievances that they use to motivate people to kill. If we act like this is a war between the United States and Islam, we're not just going to lose more Americans to terrorist attacks, but we'll also lose sight of the very principles we claim to defend.

So let my final words to you as your Commander in Chief be a reminder of what it is that you're fighting for, what it is that we are fighting for. The United States of America is not a country that imposes religious tests as a price for freedom. We're a country that was founded so that people could practice their faiths as they choose. The United States of America is not a place where some citizens have to withstand greater scrutiny or carry a special ID card or prove that they're not an enemy from within. We're a country that has bled and struggled and sacrificed against that kind of discrimination and arbitrary rule, here in our own country and around the world.

We're a nation that believes freedom can never be taken for granted and that each of us has a responsibility to sustain it. The universal right to speak your mind and to protest against authority; to live in a society that's open and free, that can criticize a President without retribution; a country where you're judged by the content of your character rather than what you look like or how you worship or what your last name is or where your family came from—that's what separates us from tyrants and terrorists.

We are a nation that stands for the rule of law and strengthened the laws of war. When the Nazis were defeated, we put them on trial. Some couldn't understand that; it had never happened before. But as one of the American lawyers who was at Nuremberg says, "I was trying to prove that the rule of law should govern human behavior." And by doing so, we broadened the scope and reach of justice around the world. We held ourselves out as a beacon and an example for others.

We are a nation that won World Wars without grabbing the resources of those we defeated. We helped them rebuild. We didn't hold on to territory, other than the cemeteries where we buried our dead. Our Greatest Generation fought and bled and died to build an

international order of laws and institutions that could preserve the peace and extend prosperity and promote cooperation among nations. And for all of its imperfections, we depend on that international order to protect our own freedom.

In other words, we are a nation that at our best has been defined by hope, and not fear. A country that went through the crucible of a Civil War to offer a new birth of freedom; that stormed the beaches of Normandy, climbed the hills of Iwo Jima; that saw ordinary people mobilize to extend the meaning of civil rights. That's who we are. That's what makes us stronger than any act of terror.

Remember that history. Remember what that flag stands for. For we depend on you—the heirs to that legacy, our men and women in uniform—and the citizens who support you to carry forward what is best in us: that commitment to a common creed; the confidence that right makes might, not the other way around.

That's how we can sustain this long struggle. That's how we'll protect this country. That's how we'll protect our Constitution against all threats, foreign and domestic.

I trust that you will fulfill that mission, as you have fulfilled all others. It has been the greatest honor of my life to serve as your Commander in Chief. I thank you for all that you've done and all that you will do in the future. May God bless you. May God bless our troops, and may God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:56 p.m. in Hangar 1. In his remarks, he referred to President Bashar al-Asad of Syria; Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi of Iraq; and Delray Beach, FL, resident Benjamin Ferencz, a retired prosecutor who participated in the Nuremberg trials that convicted Nazi war criminals. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Statement on the 75th Anniversary of the Attack on Pearl Harbor
December 7, 2016

Seventy-five years ago today, a sudden and unprovoked attack turned a tranquil harbor into a sea of flames. Over 2,400 American patriots lost their lives in the attack on Pearl Harbor: military and civilian; men, women, and children. Their sacrifice galvanized millions of GIs and Rosie the Riveters who answered the call to defend liberty at its moment of maximum peril. In the hours after the attack, President Roosevelt promised that "the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory." Thanks to the heroism of a generation, we did.

Today Michelle and I join the American people in remembering those who gave their lives at Pearl Harbor, many of them not much older than boys, and in honoring their families: spouses, siblings, sons, and daughters who still carry the memories of their loved ones in their hearts. We give thanks to the veterans and survivors of Pearl Harbor who faced down fear itself, met infamy with intrepidity, freed captive peoples from fascism, and whose example inspires us still. For out of the horrors of war, this Greatest Generation forged an enduring international order, became the backbone of the middle class, and powered America's prosperity. Their courage and resolve remind us of that fundamental American truth: that out of many, we are one; and that when we stand together, no undertaking is too great.

On this National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, we also reaffirm that the work of securing and strengthening our Nation goes on. While we can never repay the profound debt of gratitude we owe to those who served on our behalf, we can embrace our commitment to care for and support veterans of America's wars from every generation.

As a testament that even the most bitter of adversaries can become the closest of allies, I look forward to visiting the USS Arizona Memorial later this month along with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. This historic visit will stand as a tribute to the power of reconciliation and to the truth that the United States and Japan—

bound by an alliance unimaginable 75 years ago—will continue to work hand in hand for a more peaceful and secure world.

NOTE: The related proclamation of December 6 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Senate Passage of the 21st Century Cures Act
December 7, 2016

We are now one step closer to ending cancer as we know it, unlocking cures for diseases like Alzheimer's, and helping people seeking treatment for opioid addiction finally get the help they need. The bipartisan passage of the 21st Century Cures Act is an example of the progress we can make when people from both parties work together to improve the health of our families, friends, and neighbors.

The Cures Act makes important investments that will save lives. First, for the families and communities that have lost too many loved ones to the heroin and prescription opioid epidemic, it invests the $1 billion I requested in my budget to address this crisis. Second, the bill answers the Vice President's call for a moonshot in cancer research by investing $1.8 billion in new resources to accelerate discoveries. Third, it invests nearly $3 billion to build upon the major biomedical research initiatives we have launched in my administration—known as the BRAIN and Precision Medicine Initiatives—which are tackling diseases like Alzheimer's and creating new research models to find cures and better target treatments. Fourth, the Cures Act takes important steps to improve mental health, including building on the work of my administration's Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Parity Task Force. And fifth, the legislation advances the progress we've made in improving the Food and Drug Administration's drug development process by, for example, making sure patients' voices are part of those decisions.

This is a reminder of what we can do when we look out for one another. Like Joe Biden and so many other Americans, I've lost people I love deeply to cancer. I've heard often from those whose loved ones are suffering from Alzheimer's, addiction, and other debilitating diseases. Their heartbreak is real, and so we have a responsibility to respond with real solutions. This bill will make a big difference, and I look forward to signing it as soon as it reaches my desk.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 34.

Joint Statement—Canada, France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom, and United States Leaders' Statement on the Situation in Aleppo, Syria
December 7, 2016

A humanitarian disaster is taking place before our very eyes. Some 200,000 civilians, including many children, in eastern Aleppo are cut off from food and medicine supplies. Aleppo is being subjected to daily bombings and artillery attacks by the Syrian regime, supported by Russia and Iran. Hospitals and schools have not been spared. Rather, they appear to be the targets of attack in an attempt to wear people down. The images of dying children are heart breaking. We condemn the actions of the Syrian regime and its foreign backers, especially Russia, for their obstruction of humanitarian aid, and strongly condemn the Syrian regime's attacks that have devastated civilians and medical facilities and use of barrel bombs and chemical weapons.

The urgent need now is for an immediate ceasefire to allow the United Nations to get humanitarian assistance to people in eastern Aleppo and to provide humanitarian relief to those who have fled eastern Aleppo. The opposition have agreed the UN's four point plan for Aleppo. The regime needs to agree to the plan

too. We call on the Syrian regime to do this urgently to alleviate the dire situation in Aleppo; and call on Russia and Iran to use their influence to help make this happen.

We urge all parties in Syria to adhere to international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions. UN SG Ban Ki-moon has spoken about war crimes being committed in Syria. There must not be impunity for those responsible. We call on the UN to investigate respective reports and gather evidence to hold the perpetrators of war crimes to account. We are ready to consider additional restrictive measures against individuals and entities that act for or on behalf of the Syrian regime.

At the same time, Russia is blocking the UN Security Council, which is therefore unable to do its work and put an end to the atrocities. The regime's refusal to engage in a serious political process also highlights the unwillingness of both Russia and Iran to work for a political solution despite their assurances to the contrary. We support the efforts of the UN Special Envoy de Mistura to resume the political process through negotiations. Only a political settlement can bring peace for people in Syria.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement on the Death of Former Senator John H. Glenn, Jr.
December 8, 2016

When John Glenn blasted off from Cape Canaveral atop an Atlas rocket in 1962, he lifted the hopes of a nation. And when his *Friendship 7* spacecraft splashed down a few hours later, the first American to orbit the Earth reminded us that with courage and a spirit of discovery there's no limit to the heights we can reach together. With John's passing, our Nation has lost an icon, and Michelle and I have lost a friend. John spent his life breaking barriers, from defending our freedom as a decorated Marine Corps fighter pilot in World War II and Korea, to setting a transcontinental speed record, to becoming, at age 77, the oldest human to touch the stars. John always had the right stuff, inspiring generations of scientists, engineers, and astronauts who will take us to Mars and beyond, not just to visit, but to stay. Today the people of Ohio remember a devoted public servant who represented his fellow Buckeyes in the U.S. Senate for a quarter century and who fought to keep America a leader in science and technology. Our thoughts are with his beloved wife Annie, their children John and Carolyn, and the entire Glenn family. The last of America's first astronauts has left us, but propelled by their example we know that our future here on Earth compels us to keep reaching for the heavens. On behalf of a grateful nation, Godspeed, John Glenn.

NOTE: The related proclamation of December 9 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the United States-Brazil Social Security Agreement
December 8, 2016

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to section 233(e)(1) of the Social Security Act, as amended by the Social Security Amendments of 1977 (Public Law 95–216, 42 U.S.C. 433(e)(1)), I transmit herewith a social security totalization agreement with Brazil, titled "Agreement on Social Security between the United States of America and the Federative Republic of Brazil," and a related agreement titled "Administrative Arrangement between the Competent Authorities of the United States of America and the Federative Republic of Brazil for the Implementation of the

Agreement on Social Security" (collectively the "Agreements"). The Agreements were signed in Washington, D.C., on June 30, 2015.

The Agreements are similar in objective to the social security agreements already in force with most European Union countries, Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, Norway, the Republic of Korea, and Switzerland. Such bilateral agreements provide for limited coordination between the United States and foreign social security systems to eliminate dual social security coverage and taxation and to help prevent the lost benefit protection that can occur when workers divide their careers between two countries.

The Agreements contain all provisions mandated by section 233 of the Social Security Act and other provisions that I deem appropriate to carry out the purposes of section 233, pursuant to section 233(c)(4) of the Social Security Act.

I also transmit for the information of the Congress a report required by section 233(e)(1) of the Social Security Act on the estimated number of individuals who will be affected by the Agreements and the Agreements' estimated cost effect. The Department of State and the Social Security Administration have recommended the Agreements to me.

I commend the Agreement on Social Security between the United States of America and the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Administrative Arrangement between the Competent Authorities of the United States of America and the Federative Republic of Brazil for the Implementation of the Agreement on Social Security.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
December 8, 2016.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting an Alternative Pay Plan for Civilian Federal Employees

December 8, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I am transmitting a revised alternative plan for locality pay increases for civilian Federal employees covered by the General Schedule and certain other pay systems in January 2017. This revised plan supersedes the original plan issued on November 29, 2016. Title 5, United States Code, authorizes me to implement alternative pay plans for pay increases for civilian Federal employees covered by the General Schedule and certain other pay systems if, because of "national emergency or serious economic conditions affecting the general welfare," I view the adjustments that would otherwise take effect as inappropriate.

Civilian Federal employees made significant sacrifices as a result of the 3-year pay freeze that ended in January 2014. Since the pay freeze ended, annual adjustments for civilian Federal employees have also been lower than private sector pay increases and statutory formulas for adjustments to the General Schedule for 2014 through 2016. However, keeping our Nation on a sustainable fiscal course requires tough choices.

Under current law, locality pay increases averaging 28.49 percent and costing $26 billion would go into effect in January 2017. Federal agency budgets cannot sustain such increases. In my August 31, 2016, submission of an alternative plan for base pay increases, I stated that the alternative plan for locality payments would be limited so that the total combined cost of the 1.0 percent across-the-board base pay increase and the varying locality pay increases would be 1.6 percent of basic payroll, consistent with the assumption in my 2017 Budget. However, in light of the decision of Congress to provide a 2.1 percent pay increase for military personnel in 2017 and reconsideration of current and projected economic conditions, I have concluded it would be appropriate to revise my original alternative plan for locality payments so that the

total combined cost of the 1.0 percent across-the-board base pay increase and varying locality payments will be 2.1 percent of basic payroll. Thus, under the revised alternative plan, the varying locality pay increases will generate costs of 1.1 percent of basic payroll.

Accordingly, I have determined that under the authority of section 5304a of title 5, United States Code, locality-based comparability payments for the locality pay areas established by the President's Pay Agent, in the amounts set forth in the attached table, shall become effective on the first day of the first applicable pay period beginning on or after January 1, 2017. These decisions will not materially affect our ability to attract and retain a well-qualified Federal workforce.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate.

Memorandum on the Minnesota World's Fair 2023—Wellness and Well Being for All
December 9, 2016

Memorandum for the Secretary of Commerce

Subject: Minnesota World's Fair 2023: Wellness and Well Being for All

I have reviewed the reports and recommendations presented to me by you and the Secretary of State that recognition be given to the "Minnesota World's Fair 2023: Wellness and Well Being for All," and find that such recognition will be in the national interest.

I approve granting Federal recognition to the Exposition.

On that basis, please advise the appropriate agencies that official recognition is hereby granted.

I would also appreciate your taking the appropriate steps to notify the Congress of this action, in accordance with section 2(c) of Public Law 91–269.

BARACK OBAMA

Memorandum on the Minnesota World's Fair 2023—Wellness and Well Being for All
December 9, 2016

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Minnesota World's Fair 2023: Wellness and Well Being for All

In accordance with Public Law 91–269, I have approved the recommendation for Federal recognition of the "Minnesota World's Fair 2023: Wellness and Well Being for All," finding that such recognition will be in the national interest.

Accordingly, I am requesting you to notify the Bureau of International Expositions of my actions.

BARACK OBAMA

Message to the Senate Transmitting the United States-Kiribati and United States-Micronesia Maritime Boundary Treaties
December 9, 2016

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith, for the advice and consent of the Senate to their ratification, two bilateral maritime boundary treaties: the Treaty between the Government of the United States

of America and the Government of the Republic of Kiribati on the Delimitation of Maritime Boundaries, signed at Majuro on September 6, 2013; and the Treaty between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia on the Delimitation of a Maritime Boundary, signed at Koror on August 1, 2014. I also transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the treaties.

The purpose of the treaties is to establish our maritime boundaries in the South Pacific Ocean with two neighboring countries. The treaty with Kiribati establishes three maritime boundaries totaling approximately 1,260 nautical miles in length between Kiribati and the United States islands of Palmyra Atoll, Kingman Reef, Jarvis Island, and Baker Island. The treaty with the Federated States of Micronesia establishes a single maritime boundary of approximately 447 nautical miles in length between the Micronesian islands and the United States territory of Guam. The boundaries define the limit within which each country may exercise maritime jurisdiction with respect to its exclusive economic zone and continental shelf.

I believe these treaties to be fully in the interest of the United States. They reflect the tradition of cooperation and close ties with Kiribati and with the Federated States of Micronesia in this region. These boundaries have never been disputed, and the delimitation in the treaties conforms closely to the limits the United States has long asserted for our exclusive economic zone in the relevant areas.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the treaties, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
December 9, 2016.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Arms Trade Treaty
December 9, 2016

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, subject to certain declarations and understandings set forth in the enclosed report, I transmit herewith the Arms Trade Treaty, done at New York on April 2, 2013, and signed by the United States on September 25, 2013. I also transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Secretary of State with respect to the Treaty, which contains a detailed article-by-article analysis of the Treaty.

The Treaty is designed to regulate the international trade in conventional arms—including small arms, tanks, combat aircraft, and warships—and to reduce the risk that international arms transfers will be used to commit atrocities, without impeding the legitimate arms trade. It will contribute to international peace and security, will strengthen the legitimate international trade in conventional arms, and is fully consistent with rights of U.S. citizens (including those secured by the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution). United States national control systems and practices to regulate the international transfer of conventional arms already meet or exceed the requirements of the Treaty, and no further legislation is necessary to comply with the Treaty. A key goal of the Treaty is to persuade other States to adopt national control systems for the international transfer of conventional arms that are closer to our own high standards.

By providing a basis for insisting that other countries improve national control systems for the international transfer of conventional arms, the Treaty will help reduce the risk that international transfers of specific conventional arms and items will be abused to carry out the world's worst crimes, including genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. It will be an important foundational tool in ongoing efforts to prevent the illicit proliferation of

conventional weapons around the world, which creates instability and supports some of the world's most violent regimes, terrorists, and criminals. The Treaty commits States Parties to establish and maintain a national system for the international transfer of conventional arms and to implement provisions of the Treaty that establish common international standards for conducting the international trade in conventional arms in a responsible manner. The Treaty is an important first step in bringing other countries up towards our own high national standards that already meet or exceed those of the Treaty.

The Treaty will strengthen our security without undermining legitimate international trade in conventional arms. The Treaty reflects the realities of the global nature of the defense supply chain in today's world. It will benefit U.S. companies by requiring States Parties to apply a common set of standards in regulating the defense trade, which establishes a more level playing field for U.S. industry. Industry also will benefit from the international transparency required by the Treaty, allowing U.S. industry to be better informed in advance of the national regulations of countries with which it is engaged in trade. This will provide U.S. industry with a clearer view of the international trading arena, fostering its ability to make more competitive and responsible business decisions based on more refined strategic analyses of the risks, including risks of possible diversion or potential gaps in accountability for international arms transfers, and the associated mitigation measures to reduce such risks in a given market.

The Treaty explicitly reaffirms the sovereign right of each country to decide for itself, pursuant to its own constitutional and legal system, how to deal with conventional arms that are traded exclusively within its borders. It also recognizes that legitimate purposes and interests exist for both individuals and governments to own, transfer, and use conventional arms. The Treaty is fully consistent with the domestic rights of U.S. citizens, including those guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty, and that it give its advice and consent to ratification of the Treaty, subject to the understandings and declarations set forth in the accompanying report.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
December 9, 2016.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the United Nations Convention on Transparency in Treaty-Based Investor-State Arbitration
December 9, 2016

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, subject to certain reservations, I transmit herewith the United Nations Convention on Transparency in Treaty-Based Investor-State Arbitration (Convention), done at New York on December 10, 2014. The report of the Secretary of State, which includes an overview of the Convention, is enclosed for the information of the Senate.

The Convention requires the application of the modern transparency measures contained in the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) Transparency Rules to certain investor-state arbitrations occurring under international investment agreements concluded before April 2014, including under the investment chapters of U.S. free trade agreements and U.S. bilateral investment treaties. These transparency measures include publication of various key documents from the arbitration proceeding, opening of hearings to the public, and permitting non-disputing parties and other interested third persons to make submissions to the tribunal. As the UNCIT-

RAL Transparency Rules by their terms automatically apply to arbitrations commenced under international investment agreements concluded on or after April 1, 2014, and that use the UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules (unless the parties to such agreements agree otherwise), there is no need for the Convention to apply to international investment agreements concluded after that date.

Transparency in investor-state arbitration is vital, given that governmental measures of interest to the broader public can be the subject matter of the proceedings. The United States has long been a leader in promoting transparency in investor-state arbitration, and the 11 most recently concluded U.S. international investment agreements that contain investor-state arbitration already provide for modern transparency measures similar to those made applicable by the Convention. However, 41 older U.S. international investment agreements lack all or some of the transparency measures. Should the United States become a party, the Convention would require the transparency measures to apply to arbitrations under U.S. international investment agreements concluded before April 2014, to the extent that other parties to those agreements also join the Convention and to the extent the United States and such other parties do not take reservations regarding such arbitrations. The Convention would also require the transparency measures to apply in investor-state arbitrations under those agreements when the United States is the respondent and the claimants consent to their application, even if the claimants are not from a party to the Convention.

The United States was a central participant in the negotiation of the Convention in the UNCITRAL. Ratification by the United States can be expected to encourage other countries to become parties to the Convention. The Convention would not require any implementing legislation.

I recommend, therefore, that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Convention and give its advice and consent to ratification by the United States, subject to certain reservations.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
December 9, 2016.

The President's Weekly Address
December 10, 2016

Hi, everybody. It is the most wonderful time of the year, and not just because it's the holiday season, but because it's also open enrollment season over at healthcare.gov.

And I know that was a dad joke. But this weekend, I hope seriously that you will take a moment to do something really important for yourself and your family: make sure you'll have health insurance for 2017.

If you're not covered yet, now is the time to sign up. Go to healthcare.gov and shop for the plan that is right for you. Like most Americans who get coverage through healthcare.gov, there's a good chance you'll find a plan that costs less than $75 a month. And while the enrollment period lasts until the end of January, as long as you sign up by this Thursday, December 15, you'll be covered starting January 1.

Now, this doesn't apply to the roughly 250 million Americans who already get insurance through the workplace or thanks to Medicare or Medicaid. But here's what does. Every American with insurance is now covered by the strongest set of consumer protections in history: a true patients' bill of rights. You now have free preventive care, like mammograms and contraception. There are no more annual or lifetime limits on the essential care you receive. Women can't get charged more just for being a woman. Young people can stay on a parent's plan until they turn 26. And seniors get discounts on their prescriptions. Every American can rest free from the fear that one illness or accident will derail your dreams,

because discrimination against preexisting conditions is now illegal. And since 2010, we've seen the slowest health care price growth in 50 years.

Whether or not you get insurance through the Affordable Care Act, that's the health care system as we know it now. Because our goal wasn't just to make sure more people have coverage, it was to make sure more people have better coverage. That's why we want to build on the progress we've made, and I've put forth a number of ideas for how to improve the Affordable Care Act.

Now, Republicans in Congress want to repeal the whole thing and start from scratch, but trying to undo some of it could undo all of it. All those consumer protections—whether you get your health insurance from Obamacare or Medicare or Medicaid or on the job—could go right out the window. So any partisan talk you hear about repealing or replacing the Affordable Care Act should be judged by whether they keep all those improvements that benefit you and your family right now.

For example, one new study shows that if Congress repeals Obamacare as they've proposed, nearly 30 million Americans would lose their coverage—30 million. Four in five of them would come from working families. More than 9 million Americans who would receive tax credits to keep insurance affordable would no longer receive that help. That's unacceptable.

We can work together to make the system even better, and one of the best ways to do that is make sure that you're in it. So remember: Sign up on healthcare.gov by this Thursday, and your health insurance will be there for you when you wake up on January 1.

Thanks everybody, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:40 p.m. on December 9 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on December 10. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 9, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on December 10. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Regarding Designation of Emergency Funding Under the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as Amended

December 10, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with section 4(a) of the Further Continuing and Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017 (the "Act"), I hereby designate as emergency requirements all funding so designated by the Congress in the Act pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended, as outlined in the enclosed list of accounts.

The details of this action are set forth in the enclosed memorandum from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Designating Funds for Global Counterterrorism and Overseas Contingency Operations
December 10, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Mr. President:)

In accordance with section 4(b) of the Further Continuing and Security Assistance Appropriations Act, 2017 (the "Act"), I hereby designate for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism all funding including contributions from foreign governments so designated by the Congress in the Act pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended, as outlined in the enclosed list of accounts.

The details of this action are set forth in the enclosed memorandum from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate.

Remarks on Signing the 21st Century Cures Act
December 13, 2016

Vice President Joe Biden. Mr. President——

[*At this point, Vice President Biden turned to former State Sen. David Grubb of West Virginia, who had introduced the President and Vice President Biden, and his wife Katherine, both of whom remained on the stage. The Grubbs' daughter Jessica died of a drug overdose on March 2. Vice President Biden addressed them as follows.*]

Vice President Biden. It's a lousy club, but I'm proud of you. We're all proud of you.

[*Vice President Biden resumed his formal remarks as follows.*]

Vice President Biden. Mr. President, my Senate colleagues, all the Members of Congress who are here and worked so hard to get this bill done today, just let me say that last week I had the honor of presiding, probably for the last time in the United States Senate, over the Senate as, Mr. President, they moved to pass the 21st Century Cures Act. And as I said, it's probably one of the last times that I will get to preside over the Senate and maybe one of the most important moments in my career.

On behalf of the administration, let me thank all the bipartisan leadership here. I want to make this clear: This bill would have never occurred, not for some of the—without the leading voices, Republican voices, in the House and the Senate, as well as Democrats. It would have never, ever occurred. And I hope this bodes well for what will come next year, that we're back working together. This was—this is a consequential piece of legislation that was extremely important, it cost a lot of money, and it was done in the lame duck session.

Without the true bipartisan support, this piece of legislation would have never occurred, and it's going to help millions of people—millions of people. As the President and I talk—he'll talk about this in greater detail in a moment—the 21st Century Cures Act is going to harness America's best minds—science, medicine, and technology—to tackle some of our biggest and most complex health challenges of today.

The bill commits $6.3 billion over 7 years, dealing with opioid addiction, precision medicine and the BRAIN Initiative and mental illness, Alzheimer's disease and so much more. But, Mr. President, if you'll excuse—as we both have just done—a point of personal

privilege, I want to thank my colleagues. Of that $6.3 billion, $1.8 billion will go and be invested in cancer research and care.

When the President asked me last year at the State of the Union to head the Cancer Moonshot, we said we were going to ask you all for significant funding increases at NIH and the National Cancer Institute. And you all stepped up again, Republicans and Democrats. As part of the moonshot, we set up what's called a blue ribbon panel to review what should be the scientific priorities as we tackle this to try to end cancer as we know it, try to do in the next 5 years what ordinarily take 10 years.

These priorities include investing in promising new therapies like immunotherapy, using the body's own immune system to target and kill cancer cells; enhancing prevention and detection efforts in every community, regardless of the ZIP Code in which you live; supporting research to improve outcomes for children with cancer; and putting us on a path to turn what is currently a devastating cancer diagnosis into either a chronic disease or an absolute cure.

And in the process, it will fundamentally, I believe, change the culture of our fight against cancer and inject an overwhelming sense of the urgency, or, as the President often says, the urgency of now. And because every single moment counts, as Senator Murray and everybody else who's worked on this bill knows. God willing, this bill will literally—not figuratively, literally—save lives.

But most of all, what it does: Just this mere signing today, Mr. President, as you know better than I do, gives millions of Americans hope. There's probably not a one of you in this audience or anyone listening to this who hasn't had a family member or friend or someone touched by cancer.

And I want to particularly thank my colleagues, Senator McConnell and Senator Reid, who moved, Mr. President, as you know, to name this section of the bill after our son—Jill, who's here with me today—our son Beau. As we used to say in the Senate, a point of personal privilege, Mr. President, do you know he loved you? And you were wonderful to Beau. And he spent a year in Iraq, came back a decorated veteran, and he was attorney general of the State, and he never, ever, ever gave up. Nor did we.

And we had access to some of the best doctors in the world, including the head of the Department of Neuro-Oncology at MD Anderson, our—become a great friend of ours—Dr. Al Yung. Al, thank you for being here. But you know, as I said, we never gave up. But Jill and I realized that we're not the only family touched by cancer. And so many are touched who don't have nearly the support system we've had. And, Mr. President, you lost your mother, and so many other families in here have lost someone to cancer.

And as I said, this legislation is going to give hope. Every day, millions of people are praying: praying for hope, praying for time, praying that somehow something will happen just to extend their—they're not even praying for cures most of the time. Those of you who are doctors in the audience, how many times have you heard a patient say, "Doc, can you just give me just 3 more weeks so I can walk her down the aisle," or, "Just give me another 2 months; it's my first grandbaby, and I want see him or her born." It's all a matter of hours, days, weeks, months.

And what we're doing here now is, this is going to accelerate exponentially, in my view, the kinds of efforts we can make right now, things that are at our disposal right now to extend life.

Ladies and gentlemen, I believe President Obama and my colleagues in the Senate—as I said, both parties—were motivated by the same commitment that—of after whom this moonshot was named. I mean, President Kennedy had talked about going to the Moon. The problem is, there is only one Moon, and there's 200-and-some cancers. [*Laughter*] But here's what he said. Here's what he said. He said, we are unwilling to postpone. We all here are unwilling to postpone—unwilling to postpone another minute, another day. And doing what we know is within our grasp, it shows the Government at its best, Mr. President, and it shows that our politics can still come together to do

big, consequential things for the American people. I see my friend, Senator Hatch, who I worked with for years and years, had stood up in this. All—junior Senators, senior Senators, everyone came together.

So Jill and I are proud to stand beside you, Mr. President, as you sign this last law of our administration. I'm proud to have served with you, Mr. President. And your absolute commitment to changing the way in which we deal with our health care system, it's making—is going to make a big difference. And this particular bill is going to allow people to live, live longer, and live healthier. And so—but, most of all, Mr. President, I think it gives people hope.

So, ladies and gentlemen, I always kid the President that when he asked me to join him on the ticket and my daughter came home at lunch—she's a social worker—and she said: "Did he call? Did he call?" And I said, "Yes." She said, "You said yes, didn't you, Daddy?" [*Laughter*] And I said, "Yes, of course I did." And she said, "This is wonderful." She said, "You know how you're always quoting Seamus Heaney about hope and history rhyming?" And I said, "Yes." She said, "This is hope and history." I'm history, here's hope. [*Laughter*]

Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States.

The President. Thank you. Thank you, everybody. Thank you. [*Applause*] Oh, no need. Thank you very much. [*Applause*] It's all of them. Thank you. Please, have a seat. Thank you so much.

Well, welcome to the White House, everyone. It's December, so it's holiday time around here, and we thought it was a good occasion to have one more party. [*Laughter*] And this is a celebration worth having.

I want to, first of all, thank Joe Biden and Jill Biden and their entire family, who have been such extraordinary friends to us. And what a fitting way for us to be able to signify our partnership as our time comes to an end together. It makes me feel very good.

I want to thank David and Kate Grubb for sharing their family's story. As David said, we have a lot in common, and nothing more than the love of our children, our daughters. When I first met them in Charleston, their story was, unfortunately, more common than we would have liked. And I indicated a number of the people on this stage are people who have gone through tough times or have seen their loved ones suffer, either because of opioid addiction or because of cancer; who have bravely shared their story and channeled their passion into increasing the urgency all of us feel around this issue.

And so, more than anything, this is a testimony to them and an extraordinary commemoration of those that they've loved. So we're very grateful to them. Please give them a big round of applause.

We're joined by a whole bunch of Members of Congress here today. And it is wonderful to see how well Democrats and Republicans in the closing days of this Congress came together around a common cause. And I think it indicates the power of this issue and how deeply it touches every family across America.

Over the last 8 years, one of my highest priorities as President has been to unleash the full force of American innovation to some of the biggest challenges that we face. That meant restoring science to its rightful place. It meant funding the research and development that's always kept America on the cutting edge. It's meant investing in clean energy that's created a steady stream of good jobs and helped America become the world's leader in combating climate change. It meant investing in the medical breakthroughs that have the power to cure disease and help all of us live healthier, longer lives.

So I started the 2016 State of the Union Address by saying we might be able to surprise some cynics and deliver bipartisan action on the opioid epidemic. And in that same speech, I put Joe in charge of mission control on a new Cancer Moonshot. And today, with the 21st Century Cures Act, we are making good on both of those efforts. We are bringing to reality the possibility of new breakthroughs to some of the greatest health challenges of our time.

Joe has already indicated some of the scope of the bill, but let me repeat it, because it's worth repeating. First, this legislation is going

to combat the heroin and prescription opioid epidemic that is ravaging too many families across the country. This is an epidemic that can touch anybody: blue collar, white collar, college students, retirees, kids, moms, dads. I've had the chance to meet people from every stage of recovery who are working hard to sustain the progress that they're making. And I've met parents like the Grubbs, who work tirelessly to help a child struggling with addiction.

It could not be clearer that those of us called upon to lead this country have a duty on their behalf, that we have to stand by them; that, all too often, they feel as if they're fighting this fight alone instead of having the community gather around them and give them the resources and the access and the support that they need.

So today I could not be prouder that this legislation takes up the charge I laid down in my budget to provide $1 billion in funding so that Americans who want treatment can get started on the path to recovery and don't have to drive 6 hours to do it. It is the right thing to do, and families are ready for the support.

Second, the Cures Act provides a decade's worth of support for two innovative initiatives from my administration. Now, the first is the BRAIN Initiative, which we believe will revolutionize our understanding of the human mind. And when I sign this bill into law, we'll give researchers new resources to help identify ways to treat, cure, and potentially prevent brain disorders like Alzheimer's and epilepsy, traumatic brain injury, and more.

And we're also going to support what we've called our position—Precision Medicine Initiative, an effort we started to use data to help modernize research and accelerate discoveries so that treatment and health care can be tailored specifically to individual patients. This spring, with the help of this legislation, the National Institutes of Health plans to launch a groundbreaking research cohort, inviting Americans from across the country to participate to support the scientific breakthroughs of tomorrow.

Number three, the Cures Act improves mental health care. It includes bipartisan reforms to address serious mental illness. It takes steps to make sure that mental health and substance-use disorders are treated fairly by insurance companies, building on the work of my Presidential Task Force. And it reauthorizes, meaningfully, suicide prevention programs. Many of these reforms align with my administration's work to improve our criminal justice system, helping us enhance data collection and take steps so that we're not unnecessarily incarcerating folks who actually need mental health assistance.

Fourth, we're building on the FDA's work to modernize clinical trial design so that we're updating necessary rules and regulations to protect consumers so that they're taking into account this genetic biotech age. And we're making sure that patients' voices are incorporated into the drug development process.

And finally, the Cures Act invests in a breakthrough effort that we've been calling the Vice President's Cancer Moonshot. And I think the Senate came up with a better name when they named it after Beau Biden.

Joe said Beau loved me. I loved him back. And like many of you, I believe that the United States of America should be the country that ends cancer once and for all. We're already closer than a lot of folks think, and this bill will bring us even closer, investing in promising new therapies, developing vaccines, and improving cancer detection and prevention. Ultimately, it will help us reach our goal of getting a decade's worth of research in half the time. And as Joe said, that time counts.

In this effort, Joe Biden has rallied not just Congress, but he has rallied a tremendous collection of researchers and doctors, philanthropists, patients. He's showing us that with the right investment and the ingenuity of the American people, to quote him, "There isn't anything we can't do." So I'd like everybody to just please join me in thanking what I consider to be the finest Vice President in history, Joe Biden. [*Applause*] Go ahead and embarrass Joe. Go ahead. [*Laughter*] Hey! [*Applause*] Why not!

So we're tackling cancer, brain disease, substance-use disorders, and more. And none of

this work would have been possible without bipartisan cooperation in both Houses of Congress. A lot of people were involved, but there are some folks who deserve a special shout-out. That includes Senators Alexander and Senators Murphy; Representatives Upton, Pallone, and DeGette and Green. And of course, we couldn't have gotten across the finish line without the leadership of Nancy Pelosi and Steny Hoyer, who are here, as well as leaders from both Houses: Speaker Ryan, Leaders McConnell and Reid, and Senator Patty Murray. Not to mention all the Members of Congress who are sitting here that I can't name; otherwise, I'm going to be here too long, and I will never sign the bill. [*Laughter*] But you know who you are.

I want to thank all of you on behalf of the American people for this outstanding work. These efforts build on the work that we've done to strengthen our health care system over the last 8 years: covering preexisting conditions, expanding coverage for mental health and substance-use disorders, helping more than 20 million Americans know the security of health insurance. Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, it means they have access to some of the services that are needed.

I'm hopeful that in the years ahead, Congress keeps working together in a bipartisan fashion to move us forward rather than backward in support of the health of our people. Because these are gains that have made a real difference for millions of Americans.

So this is a good day. It's a bittersweet day. I think it's important to acknowledge that it's not easy for the Grubbs to come up here and talk about Jessie. It's not easy for Joe and Jill, I know, to talk about Beau. Joe mentioned my mother, who died of cancer. She was 2½ years younger than I am today when she passed away.

And so it's not always easy to remember, but being able to honor those we've lost in this way and to know that we may be able to prevent other families from feeling that same loss, that makes it a good day. And I'm confident that it will lead to better years and better lives for millions of Americans, the work that you've done. That's what we got sent here for. And it's not always what we do. It's a good day to see us doing our jobs.

So, with that, I think it's time for me to sign this bill into law.

[*The President signed the bill.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 3 p.m. in the South Court Auditorium of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Rep. R. Eugene Green. Vice President Biden referred to his daughter Ashley B. Biden. H.R. 34, approved December 13, was assigned Public Law No. 114–255.

Remarks at a Hanukkah Reception
December 14, 2016

The President. Hello, everybody! [*Laughter*] Hello, everybody. Welcome to the White House. Michelle and I want to be the first to wish all of you a happy Hanukkah. I figure we've got to be first, because we're about 10 days early. [*Laughter*]

We have some very special guests in the house to share some latkes with—[*laughter*]—so I want to call them out. We are, first of all, honored to be joined by Rabbi Steven Exler, the outstanding senior rabbi of the Hebrew Institute of Riverdale. He also happens to be Secretary Jack Lew's rabbi. [*Laughter*] He taught my Director of Jewish Outreach, Chanan Weissman. So he obviously is doing something right. Also, let's give it up for Koleinu, whose sound might be the most beautiful thing to come out of Princeton since the woman standing next to me. So—[*applause*]. That was a good one, right?

The First Lady. That was a good one. [*Laughter*]

The President. Today, in the White House, as you will soon do in your homes, we recall

Hanukkah's many lessons: How a small group can make a big difference. That's the story of the Maccabees' unlikely military victory and of great moral movements around the globe and across time. How a little bit can go a long way, like the small measure of oil that outlasted every expectation. It reminds us that even when our resources seem limited, our faith can help us make the most of what little we have. The small State of Israel and the relatively small Jewish population of this country have punched far above their weight in their contributions to the world. So the Festival of Lights is also a reminder of how Isaiah saw the Jewish people, as a light unto the nations.

This is the season that we appreciate the many miracles, large and small, that have graced our lives throughout generations and to recognize that the most meaningful among them is our freedom. The first chapter of the Hanukkah story was written 22 centuries ago, when rulers banned religious rituals and persecuted Jews who dared to observe their faith, which is why today we are asked not only to light the menorah, but to proudly display it: to publicize the mitzvah. And that's why we've invited all these reporters who are here. [*Laughter*]

Everybody in America can understand the spirit of this tradition. Proudly practicing our religion, whatever it might be, and defending the rights of others to do the same—that's our common creed. That's what families from coast to coast confirm when they place their menorah in the window, not to share the candles' glow with just your family, but also with your community and with your neighbors.

The story of Hanukkah, the story of the Jewish people, the story of perseverance—these are one and the same. Elie Wiesel taught us that lesson probably better than just about anybody. In one of his memories of the Holocaust, Elie watched a fellow prisoner trade his daily ration of bread for some simple materials with which to piece together a makeshift menorah. And he wrote that he couldn't believe the sacrifices this man was making to observe the holidays. A stunned Elie asked him, "Hanukkah in Auschwitz?" And the man replied, "Especially in Auschwitz."

The world lost my friend, Elie Wiesel, this year. We lost a keeper of our collective conscience. But we could not be more honored today to be joined by his beloved family. His wife Marion is here. [*Applause*] His wife Marion is here, beautiful as always. His son Elisha is here, his daughter-in-law Lynn, and his grandchildren Elijah and Shira. So today we're going to light a menorah that Shira made a few years ago when she was in kindergarten. [*Laughter*] And as is appropriate to the spirit of the season, it's made of simple materials. It's got bolts and tiles and glue. [*Laughter*] And it looks like some balsa wood.

Shira Wiesel. It's actually melted wax.

The President. What is it?

Shira Wiesel. It's actually melted wax.

The President. Melted wax. [*Laughter*] Just saying.

Over the years, your grandfather also corrected me several times. [*Laughter*] And it was always very helpful. [*Laughter*]

We've lit a number of beautiful menorahs here at the White House. Some that weathered storms like Katrina and Sandy; others that were crafted by spectacular artists from Israel and the United States. But I've just got to say, this is my favorite. [*Laughter*] I think this is the most beautiful one that we've ever lit. [*Laughter*] And it's a reminder that a menorah is not valuable because it's forged in silver or gold. It's treasured because it was shaped by the hands of a young girl who proves with her presence that the Jewish people survive. Through centuries of exile and persecution and even the genocide of—families like the Wiesels endured, the Hanukkah candles have been kindled, each wick an answer to the wicked, each light a signal to the world that yours is an inextinguishable faith.

Jewish leaders from the Maccabees to the Wiesels, to the college students who proudly sing Hebrew songs on campus, reaffirm our belief that light still drives out darkness, and freedom still needs fighters.

So let me close by saying I want to say how much Michelle and I appreciate the opportunities to have celebrated so many Hanukkahs with you in the White House. You know, at the beginning of my Presidency, some critics

thought it would last for only a year. [*Laughter*] But—miracle of miracles—it has lasted 8 years. [*Applause*] It's lasted 8 whole years. [*Laughter*] *Nes gadol haya po*.

Audience members. We love you.

Audience member. Got to go.

The President. Got to go! As many of you know, the name "Hanukkah" comes from the Hebrew word for "dedication." So we want to thank you again for your dedication to our country, to the historic progress that we've made, to the defense of religious freedom in the United States and around the world.

And with that, let me invite Rabbi Exler to say a few words before Elijah and Shira light the candles and get this party started. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Rabbi.

[*At this point, Rabbi Steven Exler, senior rabbi of the Hebrew Institute of Riverdale in New York City, made brief remarks and led the audience in prayer and song*.]

The President. Well, thank you, everybody. And we look forward to not just you having a wonderful time this evening and having a blessed holiday, but we also look forward to working with you on the other side of January 20.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:04 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Remarks at the "My Brother's Keeper" National Summit
December 14, 2016

Hello, everybody! Hello! Everybody, please have a seat. Welcome to the White House.

Thank you, Malachi, for the great introduction and being a great role model for the young people coming up behind you. I was watching the introduction on the screen, he's very telegenic. [*Laughter*] I—we might have to run him for something at some point. [*Laughter*] We're so proud of you.

And I want to make sure that we introduce the other young men who are behind me, as well, because they've got equally compelling stories: Devin Edwards, coming out of MBK Boston—Devin, wave; that's right, there you go—and as well as Bunker Hill Community College in Greater Boston; Jerron Hawkins, Howard University, White House Mentorship and Leadership Program; you already met Malachi; Noah McQueen, Morehouse College, one of our mentors; Luis Ramirez, MBK Oakland Career and Opportunity Fair; and Quamiir Trice, MBK Philadelphia, Howard University.

These young people behind me are proof that a little love, a little support allows them to achieve anything they can dream, anything they can conceive. Since day one, my administration has been focused on creating opportunities for all people. And by almost every measure, this country is better off than it was when I started. But what we've also long understood is that some communities have consistently had the odds stacked against them, and that's especially true for boys and young men of color.

All of you know the statistics and the stories of young people who had the intelligence, the potential to do amazing things, but somehow slipped through the cracks. And I've said this before: I see myself in these young people. I grew up without a father. There were times where I made poor choices, times where I was adrift. The only difference between me and a lot of other young men is that I grew up in a more forgiving environment. I had people who encouraged me and gave me a second chance.

And that's why Michelle and I have dedicated so much of our time to creating opportunities for young people. We know this is not just an urban problem; it's not just a people-of-color problem. This is a national challenge, because if we're going to stay ahead as a nation, we're going to need the talent of every single American. And even more than that, this is about who we are as a country, what our values are, whether we're going to continue to be a place where if you work hard, you can succeed; or whether we continue to see stagnation and diminishing mobility and the ladders of opportunity cut off for too many people. The only

way we live up to America's promise is if we value every single child, not just our own, and invest in every single child as if they're our own.

It's almost 3 years ago, we launched the "My Brother's Keeper" initiative to give more of our young people the tools and the support that they need to stay on track for a bright future. We knew this couldn't just be a Government initiative. We knew that our concerns couldn't be sporadic, just inflamed by the latest high-profile shooting or some other disturbance. It had to be sustained, thought through. Progress had to be measurable.

So we put out a call for action across the country. And I've just got to say, the response was incredible. Hundreds of you—mayors, tribal leaders, county executives—have created MBK communities in all 50 States, as well as DC and Puerto Rico. Businesses and foundations, many of whom are represented here today, are working across sectors and investing more than a billion dollars in proven pathways for young people.

In just a few years, the progress we've made is remarkable. So I just wanted to come by and say thank you. [*Applause*] Thank you. Thank you for stepping up to the challenge. Thank you for being great partners in this work. Thank you for believing in our young people.

I also want to say thank you to the young men who are here and who came in from across the country and many of whom are watching or may be listening, who have been part of this initiative. I've had a chance to meet many of these young people. Everybody on this stage, I've had significant conversations with. I've heard their stories, and I've seen young men like this grow into confident, capable, responsible men. Many of you have overcome unbelievable obstacles, obstacles that most people never have to face. It hasn't always been easy, but look at the progress that you've inspired. I could not be prouder of these young people and so many who are participating around the country.

And this is just the beginning. We are going to keep these efforts going to invest in our young people, to break down barriers to keep—that keep them from getting ahead, and to make sure that they've got a chance to contribute. And we're going to need more of you to be mentors and role models and supporters for this next generation. As they keep moving up in the world, then we're going to call on them to reach back and invest in the folks who are coming behind them.

And that's the final point I want to make. "My Brother's Keeper" was not about me, it was not about my Presidency. It's not even just about Malachi and all these amazing young men behind me. It's about all of us working together. Because ensuring that our young people can go as far as their dreams and hard work will take them is the single most important task that we have as a nation. It is the single most important thing we can do for our country's future. This is something I will be invested in for the rest of my life, and I look forward to continuing the journey with you.

So, to the young people who are here, thank you. To folks who are investing and supporting this effort, thank you. But we are just scratching the surface.

For every one of these young men, there are tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands who are not currently being reached. And although it is important for us to poke and prod and push government at every level to make the investments that are necessary—to ensure our schools are properly funded and are teaching the kids what they need to learn, that we are investing and making sure that there are jobs available in communities so that people can see that there is a right path to go down that will result in them having a bright future; although there's infrastructure that has to be built by the government to ensure that our young people can succeed and prosper in this 21st-century economy—we can't wait for government to do it for us.

We've got to make sure that we're out there showing what works. We've got to put our own time and energy and effort and money into the effort. We have to be rigorous in measuring what works. We can't hang onto programs just because they've been around a long time. We can't be protective of programs that have not

produced results for young people, even if they've produced some jobs for some folks running them. [*Laughter*] And we have to make sure that we're casting a wide net so that we're not just cherry-picking some kids who probably have so much drive, they'd make it anyway. We've also got to go deep, including into places like juvenile facilities and our prisons to make sure that some very still-young people are reachable.

So this is going to be a big project. It is as a consequence of neglect over generations that so many of these challenges exist. We shouldn't expect that we're going to solve these problems overnight, but we've got proof about what happens when, as Malachi said, you just give folks a little love and you act on that love. And I'm looking forward to working with you to do that.

Thank you, everybody. God bless. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:03 p.m. in the South Court Auditorium of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Malachi Hernandez, student, Northeastern University in Boston, MA.

Remarks at a Hanukkah Reception
December 14, 2016

The President. Hello, hello, hello! Hello. Good evening, everybody! Welcome to the White House, and happy Hanukkah! It so happens we're a little early this year. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. It's all right. It's all right.

The President. But Michelle and I are going to be in Hawaii when Hanukkah begins, and we agreed that it's never too soon to enjoy some latkes and jelly doughnuts. [*Laughter*] This is our second Hanukkah party today, but in the spirit of the holiday, the White House kitchen has not run out of oil. [*Laughter*] Dad jokes for every occasion. [*Laughter*]

I want to recognize some special guests that are with us today. There are a number of Members of Congress here who obviously are so supportive of the values that are represented by this holiday and extraordinarily strong friends of Israel. We've got Justice Breyer and Justice Ginsburg in the house. We've got one of the country's finest jurists, who I happened to have nominated to the Supreme Court and who's going to continue to serve our country with distinction as the Chief Judge on the DC Circuit, Merrick Garland is here. [*Applause*] Thanks you, Merrick.

Our wonderful and outstanding and tireless Secretary of the Treasury, Jack Lew, is here. As is our U.S. Trade Representative and former BBYO president, Mike Froman. And I want to give it up for our outstanding musical guests, Six13, who just did a amazing performance for Michelle and I of——

The First Lady. It was a "Hamilton" remix.

The President. ——a "Hamilton" remix talking about the Maccabees and the President and menorahs, and——

The First Lady. It was good.

The President. If you ever have a chance to get the mix tape, you should buy it. [*Laughter*]

Now, this is the eighth year that Michelle and I have hosted this little gathering. And over the years, we've welcomed Jewish Supreme Court Justices, Cabinet Secretaries, Members of Congress. We celebrated Alan Gross's return from captivity in Cuba. We got to celebrate a once-in-70,000-year event, Thanksgivukkah—[*laughter*]—where we lit the "menurkey." [*Laughter*] That was a turkey-shaped menorah, in case you forgot. [*Laughter*]

The First Lady. We got it.

The President. So this is a White House tradition that we are proud to carry on. It gives us a lot of *nachas*. [*Laughter*] If I pronounced that right, then that was a Hanukkah miracle. [*Laughter*]

Tonight we come together for the final time to tell a familiar story, so familiar that even we Gentiles know it. [*Laughter*] But as many times as we tell it, this 2,000-year-old tale never gets old. In every generation, we take heart from the Maccabees' struggle against tyranny, their fight to live in peace and practice their religion in peace. We teach our children that

even in our darkest moments, a stubborn flame of hope flickers and miracles are possible.

Now, that spirit from two millennia ago inspired America's Founders two centuries ago. They proclaimed a new nation where citizens could speak and assemble and worship as they wished. George Washington himself was said to have been stirred by the lights of Hanukkah after seeing a soldier seek the warmth of a menorah in the snows of Valley Forge. And years later, Washington wrote that timeless letter we have on display today in the White House. I hope you saw it when you walked in. Washington assured the Jews of Newport, Rhode Island, that the United States "gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance." He went on to write that all that is required of those "who live under [the Nation's] protection" is that they be "good citizens."

It's easy sometimes to take these fundamental freedoms for granted. But they too are miraculous. They too have to be nurtured and safeguarded. And it's in defense of these ideals—precisely because the Jewish people have known oppression—that throughout our history, this community has been at the forefront of every fight for freedom. It's why Jews marched in Selma, why they mobilized after Stonewall, why synagogues have opened their doors to refugees, why Jewish leaders have spoken out against all forms of hatred.

And in my last months in office, I want to thank you for all your courage and your conviction and your outspokenness. The story of this community and the work you continue to do to repair the world forever reminds us to have faith that there are brighter days ahead. The menorah—[*laughter*].

The First Lady. Hey, it's true. They're a little cynical. [*Laughter*]

The President. No, no, no, they're not cynical.

The First Lady. Little doubtful.

The President. The menorah we light today is a testament to such resilient optimism. It belonged to Rina and Joseph Walden, a young Polish couple who acquired it in the early 1900s. When the Second World War came, the Waldens fled to France and took shelter on a farm. And they hid their Jewishness, including their magnificent menorah, entrusting it to a courageous neighbor. But one Hanukkah, they retrieved their menorah and lit it behind locked doors and covered windows. That same week, the Nazis raided their neighbor's house and burned it to the ground. Of all the Walden family's treasures, only this menorah survived.

A few years later, the Waldens moved to Israel, where their son Raphael met a young woman named Tzvia Peres, the only daughter of one of Israel's founding fathers and greatest statesmen. And I had the honor to go to Jerusalem earlier this year to bid farewell to my dear friend Shimon Peres and reaffirm the commitment of the United States to the State of Israel. We could not be more honored to have Shimon's son Chemi, his grandson Guy, and his granddaughter Mika here with us tonight.

The Walden-Peres family lit these lights when the State of Israel was new. They've blazed it in the months after the Yom Kippur War and the Camp David Accords. And tonight Chemi and Mika will light this amazing heirloom in the White House. And as they do, we hope all of you draw strength from the divine spark in Shimon Peres, whose miraculous life taught us that "faith and moral vision can triumph over all adversity." I hope it inspires us to rededicate ourselves to upholding the freedoms we hold dear at home and around the world; that we are able to see those who are not like us and recognize their dignity, not just those who are similar to us. I hope it inspires us to continue to work for peace, even when it is hard, perhaps especially when it is hard.

And as Washington wrote to the Jews of Newport more than 200 years ago, "May the father of all mercies scatter light, and not darkness, in our paths."

I'd now like to invite Rabbi Rachel Isaacs from Colby College and Temple Beth Israel in Waterville, Maine—which I said sounds cold—[*laughter*]—to say a few words and lead us in blessings. But first, I have to get a box, because she's a little shorter than I am. [*Laughter*]

[*At this point, Rabbi Rachel M. Isaacs, associate professor of Jewish studies at Colby College, made brief remarks, offered a prayer, and led the audience in song.*]

The President. Well, we hope that you enjoy this celebration here at the White House. On behalf of Michelle and myself, we could not be more grateful for your friendship and your prayers. And we want to emphasize that although we will be leaving here on January 20——

Audience members. No!

The President. ——we will meet you on the other side. [*Laughter*] And we've still got a lot of work to do. We look forward to doing that work with you, because it's not something that we can do alone, and you've always been such an extraordinary group of friends that strengthen us in so many different ways.

I should also note that your singing was outstanding. [*Laughter*] I think this was an exceptional group of voices here. [*Laughter*]

Thank you very much, everybody. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:40 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Alan P. Gross, a former U.S. Agency for International Development contractor who was detained by Cuban authorities for 5 years and released to U.S. custody on December 17, 2014; and Mika Almog, granddaughter of former President Shimon Peres of Israel.

The President's News Conference
December 16, 2016

The President. Good afternoon. This is the most wonderful press conference of the year. [*Laughter*] I've got a list of who's been naughty and nice to call on. [*Laughter*] But let me first make a couple of quick points, and then I'll take your questions.

Typically, I use this year-end press conference to review how far we've come over the course of the year. Today, understandably, I'm going to talk a little bit about how far we've come over the past 8 years.

As I was preparing to take office, the unemployment rate was on its way to 10 percent. Today, it's at 4.6 percent, the lowest in nearly a decade. We've seen the longest streak of job growth on record, and wages have grown faster over the past few years than at any time in the past 40.

When I came into office, 44 million people were uninsured. Today, we've covered more than 20 million of them. For the first time in our history, more than 90 percent of Americans are insured. In fact, yesterday was the biggest day ever for healthcare.gov. More than 670,000 Americans signed up to get covered, and more are signing up by the day.

We've cut our dependence on foreign oil by more than half, doubled production of renewable energy, enacted the most sweeping reforms since FDR to protect consumers and prevent a crisis on Wall Street from punishing Main Street ever again. None of these actions stifled growth, as critics predicted. Instead, the stock market has nearly tripled. Since I signed Obamacare into law, our businesses have added more than 15 million new jobs. And the economy is undoubtedly more durable than it was in the days when we relied on oil from unstable nations and banks took risky bets with your money.

Add it all up, and last year, the poverty rate fell at the fastest rate in almost 50 years, while the median household income grew at the fastest rate on record. In fact, income gains were actually larger for households at the bottom and the middle than for those at the top. And we've done all this while cutting our deficits by nearly two-thirds and protecting vital investments that grow the middle class.

In foreign policy, when I came into office, we were in the midst of two wars. Now, nearly 180,000 troops are down to 15,000. Bin Laden, rather than being at large, has been taken off the battlefield, along with thousands of other terrorists. Over the past 8 years, no foreign terrorist organization has successfully executed an

attack on our homeland that was directed from overseas.

Through diplomacy, we've ensured that Iran cannot obtain a nuclear weapon, without going to war with Iran. We opened up a new chapter with the people of Cuba. And we brought nearly 200 nations together around a climate agreement that could very well save this planet for our kids. And almost every country on Earth sees America as stronger and more respected today than they did 8 years ago.

In other words, by so many measures, our country is stronger and more prosperous than it was when we started. It's a situation that I'm proud to leave for my successor. And it's thanks to the American people: to the hard work that you've put in, the sacrifices you've made for your families and your communities, the businesses that you started or invested in, the way you looked out for one another. And I could not be prouder to be your President.

Of course, to tout this progress doesn't mean that we're not mindful of how much more there is to do. In this season in particular, we're reminded that there are people who are still hungry, people who are still homeless, people who still have trouble paying the bills or finding work after being laid off. There are communities that are still mourning those who have been stolen from us by senseless gun violence and parents who still are wondering how to protect their kids. And after I leave office, I intend to continue to work with organizations and citizens doing good across the country on these and other pressing issues to build on the progress that we've made.

Around the world, as well, there are hotspots where disputes have been intractable, conflicts have flared up, and people—innocent people—are suffering as a result. And nowhere is this more terribly true than in the city of Aleppo. For years, we've worked to stop the civil war in Syria and alleviate human suffering. It has been one of the hardest issues that I've faced as President.

The world, as we speak, is united in horror at the savage assaults by the Syrian regime and its Russian and Iranian allies on the city of Aleppo. We have seen a deliberate strategy of surrounding, besieging, and starving innocent civilians. We've seen relentless targeting of humanitarian workers and medical personnel; entire neighborhoods reduced to rubble and dust. There are continuing reports of civilians being executed. And these are all horrific violations of international law. Responsibility for this brutality lies in one place alone: with the Asad regime and its allies Russia and Iran. And this blood and these atrocities are on their hands.

We all know what needs to happen. There needs to be an impartial international observer force in Aleppo that can help coordinate an orderly evacuation through safe corridors. There has to be full access for humanitarian aid, even as the United States continues to be the world's largest donor of humanitarian aid to the Syrian people. And beyond that, there needs to be a broader cease-fire that can serve as the basis for a political rather than a military solution. That's what the United States is going to continue to push for, both with our partners and through multilateral institutions like the U.N.

And regretfully, but unsurprisingly, Russia has repeatedly blocked the Security Council from taking action on these issues. So we're going to keep pressing the Security Council to help improve the delivery of humanitarian aid to those who are in such desperate need, and to ensure accountability, including continuing to monitor any potential use of chemical weapons in Syria. And we're going to work in the U.N. General Assembly as well, both on accountability and to advance a political settlement. Because it should be clear that although you may achieve tactical victories, over the long term, the Asad regime cannot slaughter its way to legitimacy.

That's why we'll continue to press for a transition to a more representative government. And that's why the world must not avert our eyes to the terrible events that are unfolding. The Syrian regime and its Russian and Iranian allies are trying to obfuscate the truth. The world should not be fooled. And the world will not forget.

So, even in a season where the incredible blessings that we know as Americans are all

around us, even as we enjoy family and friends and are reminded of how lucky we are, we should also be reminded that to be an American involves bearing burdens and meeting obligations to others. American values and American ideals are what will lead the way to a safer and more prosperous 2017, both here and abroad.

And by the way, few embody those values and ideals like our brave men and women in uniform and their families. So I just want to close by wishing all of them a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

With that, I will take some questions. And I'm going to start with Josh Lederman of AP.

2016 Presidential Election/President-Elect Donald J. Trump/Russia/Democratic National Committee/Cybersecurity

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. There's a perception that you're letting President Putin get away with interfering in the U.S. election and that a response that nobody knows about or a look-back review just don't cut it. Are you prepared to call out President Putin by name for ordering this hacking? And do you agree with what Hillary Clinton now says, that the hacking was actually partially responsible for her loss? And is your administration's open quarreling with Trump and his team on this issue tarnishing the smooth transition of power that you have promised?

The President. Well, first of all, with respect to the transition, I think they would be the first to acknowledge that we have done everything we can to make sure that they are successful as I promised. And that will continue. And it's just been a few days since I last talked to the President-elect about a whole range of transition issues. That cooperation is going to continue.

There hasn't been a lot of squabbling. What we've simply said is the facts, which are that, based on uniform intelligence assessments, the Russians were responsible for hacking the DNC and that, as a consequence, it is important for us to review all elements of that and make sure that we are preventing that kind of interference through cyber attacks in the future.

That should be a bipartisan issue; that shouldn't be a partisan issue. And my hope is that the President-elect is going to similarly be concerned with making sure that we don't have potential foreign influence in our election process. I don't think any American wants that. And that shouldn't be a source of an argument.

I think that part of the challenge is that it gets caught up in the carryover from election season. And I think it is very important for us to distinguish between the politics of the election and the need for us, as a country, both from a national security perspective, but also in terms of the integrity of our election system and our democracy, to make sure that we don't create a political football here.

Now, with respect to how this thing unfolded last year, let's just go through the facts pretty quickly. At the beginning of the summer, we're alerted to the possibility that the DNC has been hacked, and I immediately order law enforcement as well as our intelligence teams to find out everything about it, investigate it thoroughly, to brief the potential victims of this hacking, to brief on a bipartisan basis the leaders of both the House and the Senate and the relevant intelligence committees. And once we had clarity and certainty around what, in fact, had happened, we publicly announced that, in fact, Russia had hacked into the DNC.

And at that time, we did not attribute motives or any interpretations of why they had done so. We didn't discuss what the effects of it might be. We simply let people know—the public know, just as we had let Members of Congress know—that this had happened.

And as a consequence, all of you wrote a lot of stories about both what had happened, and then you interpreted why that might have happened and what effect it was going to have on the election outcomes. We did not. And the reason we did not was because in this hyperpartisan atmosphere, at a time when my primary concern was making sure that the integrity of the election process was not in any way damaged, at a time when anything that was said by me or anybody in the White House would immediately be seen through a partisan lens, I wanted to make sure that everybody understood

we were playing this thing straight, that we weren't trying to advantage one side or another, but what we were trying to do was let people know that this had taken place, and so if you started seeing effects on the election, if you were trying to measure why this was happening and how you should consume the information that was being leaked, that you might want to take this into account.

And that's exactly how we should have handled it. Imagine if we had done the opposite. It would have become immediately just one more political scrum. And part of the goal here was to make sure that we did not do the work of the leakers for them by raising more and more questions about the integrity of the election right before the election was taking place; at a time, by the way, when the President-elect himself was raising questions about the integrity of the election.

And finally, I think it's worth pointing out that the information was already out. It was in the hands of WikiLeaks, so that was going to come out no matter what. What I was concerned about, in particular, was making sure that that wasn't compounded by potential hacking that could hamper vote counting, affect the actual election process itself.

And so, in early September, when I saw President Putin in China, I felt that the most effective way to ensure that that didn't happen was to talk to him directly and tell him to cut it out and there were going to be some serious consequences if he didn't. And in fact, we did not see further tampering of the election process. But the leaks through WikiLeaks had already occurred.

So when I look back in terms of how we handled it, I think we handled it the way it should have been handled. We allowed law enforcement and the intelligence community to do its job without political influence. We briefed all relevant parties involved in terms of what was taking place. When we had a consensus around what had happened, we announced it, not through the White House, not through me, but rather through the intelligence communities that had actually carried out these investigations. And then we allowed you and the American public to make an assessment as to how to weigh that going into the election.

And the truth is, is that there was nobody here who didn't have some sense of what kind of effect it might have. I'm finding it a little curious that everybody is suddenly acting surprised that this looked like it was disadvantaging Hillary Clinton, because you guys wrote about it every day. [*Laughter*] Every single leak. About every little juicy tidbit of political gossip, including John Podesta's risotto recipe. [*Laughter*] This was an obsession that dominated the news coverage.

So I do think it's worth us reflecting how it is that a Presidential election of such importance, of such moment, with so many big issues at stake, and such a contrast between the candidates, came to be dominated by a bunch of these leaks. What is it about our political system that made us vulnerable to these kinds of potential manipulations, which, as I've said publicly before, were not particularly sophisticated.

This was not some elaborate, complicated espionage scheme. They hacked into some Democratic Party e-mails that contained pretty routine stuff, some of it embarrassing or uncomfortable, because I suspect that if any of us got our e-mails hacked into, there might be some things that we wouldn't want suddenly appearing on the front page of a newspaper or a telecast, even if there wasn't anything particularly illegal or controversial about it. And then it just took off.

And that concerns me. And it should concern all of us. But the truth of the matter is, is that everybody had the information. It was out there. And we handled it the way we should have.

Now, moving forward, I think there are a couple of issues that this raises. Number one is just the constant challenge that we are going to have with cybersecurity throughout our economy and throughout our society. We are a digitalized culture, and there is hacking going on every single day. There's not a company, there's not a major organization, there's not a financial institution, there's not a branch of our Government where somebody is not going to

be phishing for something or trying to penetrate or put in a virus or malware. And this is why for the last 8 years, I've been obsessed with how do we continually upgrade our cybersecurity systems.

And this particular concern around Russian hacking is part of a broader set of concerns about how do we deal with cyber issues being used in ways that can affect our infrastructure, affect the stability of our financial systems, and affect the integrity of our institutions, like our election process.

I just received a couple weeks back—it wasn't widely reported on—a report from our Cybersecurity Commission that outlines a whole range of strategies to do a better job on this. But it's difficult, because it's not all housed—the target of cyber attacks is not one entity, but it's widely dispersed, and a lot of it is private, like the DNC. It's not a branch of government. We can't tell people what to do. What we can do is inform them, get best practices.

What we can also do is to, on a bilateral basis, warn other countries against these kinds of attacks. And we've done that in the past. So, just as I told Russia to stop it and indicated there will be consequences when they do it, the Chinese have, in the past, engaged in cyber attacks directed at our companies to steal trade secrets and proprietary technology. And I had to have the same conversation with Prime Minister—or with President Xi, and what we've seen is some evidence that they have reduced, but not completely eliminated, these activities, partly because they can use cutouts.

One of the problems with the Internet and cyber issues is that there's not always a return address, and by the time you catch up to it, attributing what happened to a particular Government can be difficult, not always provable in court even though our intelligence communities can make an assessment.

What we've also tried to do is to start creating some international norms about this to prevent some sort of cyber arms race, because we obviously have offensive capabilities as well as defensive capabilities. And my approach is not a situation in which everybody is worse off because folks are constantly attacking each other back and forth, but putting some guardrails around the behavior of nation-states, including our adversaries, just so that they understand that whatever they do to us we can potentially do to them.

We do have some special challenges, because oftentimes, our economy is more digitalized, it is more vulnerable, partly because we're a wealthier nation and we're more wired than some of these other countries. And we have a more open society and engage in less control and censorship over what happens over the Internet, which is also part of what makes us special.

Last point—and the reason I'm going on here is because I know that you guys have a lot of questions about this, and I haven't addressed all of you directly about it—with respect to response, my principal goal leading up to the election was making sure that the election itself went off without a hitch, that it was not tarnished, and that it did not feed any sense in the public that somehow tampering had taken place with the actual process of voting. And we accomplished that.

That does not mean that we are not going to respond. It simply meant that we had a set of priorities leading up to the election that were of the utmost importance. Our goal continues to be to send a clear message to Russia or others not to do this to us, because we can do stuff to you.

But it is also important for us to do that in a thoughtful, methodical way. Some of it we do publicly. Some of it we will do in a way that they know, but not everybody will. And I know that there have been folks out there who suggest somehow that if we went out there and made big announcements and thumped our chests about a bunch of stuff, that somehow that would potentially spook the Russians. But keep in mind that we already have enormous numbers of sanctions against the Russians. The relationship between us and Russia has deteriorated, sadly, significantly over the last several years. And so how we approach an appropriate response that increases costs for them for behavior like this in the future, but does not

create problems for us, is something that's worth taking the time to think through and figure out. And that's exactly what we've done.

So, at a point in time where we've taken certain actions that we can divulge publicly, we will do so. There are times where the message will go—will be directly received by the Russians and not publicized. And I should point out, by the way, part of why the Russians have been effective on this is because they don't go around announcing what they're doing. It's not like Putin is going around the world publicly saying, look what we did, wasn't that clever? He denies it. So the idea that somehow public shaming is going to be effective, I think, doesn't read the thought process in Russia very well.

Okay?

2016 Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton/Democratic Party

Q. Did Clinton lose because of the hacking?

The President. I'm going to let all the political pundits in this town have a long discussion about what happened in the election. It was a fascinating election, so I'm sure there are going to be a lot of books written about it.

I've said what I think is important for the Democratic Party going forward rather than try to parse every aspect of the election. And I've said before, I couldn't be prouder of Secretary Clinton, her outstanding service. I think she's worked tirelessly on behalf of the American people, and I don't think she was treated fairly during the election. I think the coverage of her and the issues was troubling.

But having said that, what I've been most focused on—appropriate for the fact that I'm not going to be a politician in about, what is it, 32 days? 31?

Q. Thirty-four.

The President. Thirty four? [*Laughter*] But what I've said is, is that I can maybe give some counsel and advice to the Democratic Party. And I think that the thing we have to spend the most time on—because it's the thing we have the most control over—is, how do we make sure that we are showing up in places where I think Democratic policies are needed, where they are helping, where they are making a difference, but where people feel as if they're not being heard and where Democrats are characterized as coastal, liberal, latte-sipping, politically correct, out-of-touch folks? We have to be in those communities. And I've seen that when we are in those communities, it makes a difference.

That's how I became President. I became a U.S. Senator not just because I had a strong base in Chicago, but because I was driving around downstate Illinois and going to fish fries and sitting in VFW halls and talking to farmers. And I didn't win every one of their votes, but they got a sense of what I was talking about, what I cared about, that I was for working people, that I was for the middle class, that the reason I was interested in strengthening unions and raising the minimum wage and rebuilding our infrastructure and making sure that parents had decent childcare and family leave was because my own family's history wasn't that different from theirs, even if I looked a little bit different. Same thing in Iowa.

And so the question is, how do we rebuild that party as a whole so that there's not a county in any State—I don't care how red—where we don't have a presence and we're not making the argument. Because I think we have the better argument. But that requires a lot of work. It's been something that I've been able to do successfully in my own campaigns. It is not something I've been able to transfer to candidates in midterms and sort of build a sustaining organization around. That's something that I would have liked to have done more of, but it's kind of hard to do when you're also dealing with a whole bunch of issues here in the White House.

And that doesn't mean, though, that it can't be done. And I think there are going to be a lot of talented folks out there, a lot of progressives who share my values who are going to be leading the charge in the years to come.

Michelle Kosinski of CNN.

The President's Communications With President-Elect Donald J. Trump/Federal Bureau of Investigation

Q. Thank you. So this week we heard Hillary Clinton talk about how she thinks that the FBI Director's most recent announcement made a difference in the outcome of the election. And we also just heard in an op-ed her campaign chairman talk about something being deeply broken within the FBI. He talked about thinking that the investigation early on was lackadaisical in his words. So what do you think about those comments? Do you think there's any truth to them? Do you think there's a danger there that they're calling into question the integrity of institutions in a similar way that Donald Trump's team has done?

And a second part to that is that Donald Trump's team repeatedly—I guess, giving the indication that the investigation of the Russian hack, as well as the retaliation, might not be such a priority once he's in office, so what do you think the risk is there? And are you going to talk to him directly about some of those comments he made?

The President. Well, on the latter point, as I said before, the transition from election season to governance season is not always smooth. It's bumpy. There are still feelings that are raw out there. There are people who are still thinking about how things unfolded. And I get all that. But when Donald Trump takes the oath of office and is sworn as the 45th President of the United States, then he's got a different set of responsibilities and considerations.

And I've said this before: I think there is a sobering process when you walk into the Oval Office. And I haven't shared previously private conversations I've had with the President-elect. I will say that they have been cordial and, in some cases, have involved me making some pretty specific suggestions about how to ensure that regardless of our obvious deep disagreements about policy, maybe I can transmit some thoughts about maintaining the effectiveness, integrity, cohesion of the office, our various democratic institutions. And he has listened. I can't say that he will end up implementing, but the conversations themselves have been cordial as opposed to defensive in any way. And I will always make myself available to him, just as previous Presidents have made themselves available to me as issues come up.

With respect to the FBI, I will tell you, I've had a chance to know a lot of FBI agents, I know Director Comey. They take their job seriously, they work really hard, they help keep us safe and save a lot of lives. And it is always a challenge for law enforcement when there's an intersection between the work that they are doing and the political system. It's one of the difficulties of democracy, generally. We have a system where we want our law enforcement investigators and our prosecutors to be free from politics, to be independent, to play it straight, but sometimes, that involves investigations that touch on politics. And particularly in this hyperpartisan environment that we've been in, everything is suspect, everything you do one way or the other.

One thing that I have done is to be pretty scrupulous about not wading into investigation decisions or prosecution decisions or decisions not to prosecute. I have tried to be really strict in my own behavior about preserving the independence of law enforcement, free from my own judgments and political assessments, in some cases. And I don't know why I would stop now.

Mike Dorning of Bloomberg. There you are.

The President's Sense of Personal Responsibility for Addressing International Crises/Syria

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. On Aleppo, your views that what happens there is the responsibility of the Russian Government, the Iranian Government, the Asad regime have been pretty well aired. But do you, as President of the United States, leader of the free world, feel any personal, moral responsibility now at the end of your Presidency for the carnage that we're all watching in Aleppo, which I'm sure disturbs you, which you said disturbs you?

Secondly, also on Aleppo, you've again made clear your practical disagreements with the idea of safe zones. And President-elect Trump

has, throughout his campaign—and he said again last night—that he wants to create safe zones in Syria. Do you feel like, in this transition, you need to help him toward implementing that? Or was that not something that you should be doing?

The President. Good. Mike, I always feel responsible. I've felt responsible when kids were being shot by snipers. I felt responsible when millions of people had been displaced. I feel responsible for murder and slaughter that's taken place in South Sudan that's not being reported on partly because there's not as much social media being generated from there.

There are places around the world where horrible things are happening, and because of my office, because I'm President of the United States, I feel responsible. I ask myself every single day, is there something I could do that would save lives and make a difference and spare some child who doesn't deserve to suffer.

So that's a starting point. There's not a moment during the course of this Presidency where I haven't felt some responsibility. That's true, by the way, for our own country. When I came into office and people were losing their jobs and losing their homes and losing their pensions, I felt responsible, and I would go home at night, and I would ask myself, was there something better that I could do or smarter that I could be that would make a difference in their lives, that would relieve their suffering and relieve their hardship?

So, with respect to Syria, what I have consistently done is taken the best course that I can to try to end the civil war while having also to take into account the long-term national security interests of the United States.

And throughout this process, based on hours of meetings—if you tallied it up, days or weeks of meetings where we went through every option in painful detail, with maps, and we had our military, and we had our aid agencies, and we had our diplomatic teams, and sometimes, we'd bring in outsiders who were critics of ours—whenever we went through it, the challenge was that, short of putting large numbers of U.S. troops on the ground, uninvited, without any international law mandate, without sufficient support from Congress, at a time when we still had troops in Afghanistan and we still had troops in Iraq and we had just gone through over a decade of war and spent trillions of dollars, and when the opposition on the ground was not cohesive enough to necessarily govern a country, and you had a military superpower in Russia prepared to do whatever it took to keep its client state involved, and you had a regional military power in Iran that saw their own vital strategic interests at stake and were willing to send in as many of their people or proxies to support the regime—that in that circumstance, unless we were all in and willing to take over Syria, we were going to have problems, and that everything else was tempting because we wanted to do something and it sounded like the right thing to do, but it was going to be impossible to do this on the cheap.

And in that circumstance, I have to make a decision as President of the United States as to what is best——

[*At this point, a reporter attending the news conference fainted.*]

The President. I'm sorry, what's going on?

Q. Somebody passed out.

The President. Somebody's not feeling good? All right. Why don't we have—we've got—we can get our doctors back there to help out. Does somebody want to go to my doctor's office and just have them—all right—where was I?

Q. Doing it on the cheap.

The President. So we couldn't do it on the cheap. Now, it may be——

Q. We need to get a doctor in here, I think. Can that be arranged? Thank you.

The President. Can somebody help out please and get Doc Jackson in here? Is somebody grabbing our doctor?

Q. Thank you, Mr. President, for stopping.

The President. Of course. In the meantime, just give her a little room. The doctor will be here in a second. You guys know where the doctor's office is? Just go through the Palm doors. It's right next to the Map Room. There he is. All right, there's Doc Jackson. He's all right. Okay. The doctor is in the house.

Q. You were saying you can't do it on the cheap.

The President. So—and I don't mean that—I mean that with all sincerity. I understand the impulse to want to do something. But ultimately, what I've had to do is to think about what can we sustain, what is realistic. And my first priority has to be, what's the right thing to do for America?

And it has been our view that the best thing to do has been to provide some support to the moderate opposition so that they could sustain themselves, and that we wouldn't see anti–Asad regime sentiments just pouring into al-Nusra and Al Qaida or ISIL; that we engaged our international partners in order to put pressure on all the parties involved, and to try to resolve this through diplomatic and political means.

I cannot claim that we've been successful. And so that's something that, as is true with a lot of issues and problems around the world, I have to go to bed with every night. But I continue to believe that it was the right approach, given what realistically we could get done absent a decision, as I said, to go in a much more significant way. And that, I think, would not have been sustainable or good for the American people because we had a whole host of other obligations that we also had to meet, wars we had already started and that were not yet finished.

With respect to the issue of safe zones, it is a continued problem. A continued challenge with safe zones is, if you're setting up those zones on Syrian territory, then that requires some force that is willing to maintain that territory in the absence of consent from the Syrian Government and, now, the Russians or the Iranians. So it may be that with Aleppo's tragic situation unfolding, that in the short term, if we can get more of the tens of thousands who are still trapped there out, that so long as the world's eyes are on them and they are feeling pressure, the regime and Russia concludes that they are willing to find some arrangement, perhaps in coordination with Turkey, whereby those people can be safe. Even that will probably be temporary, but at least it solves a short-term issue that's going to arise.

Unfortunately, we're not even there yet, because right now we have Russians and Asad claiming that basically all the innocent civilians who were trapped in Aleppo are out when international organizations, humanitarian organizations who know better and who are on the ground have said unequivocally that there are still tens of thousands who are trapped and prepared to leave under pretty much any conditions. And so right now our biggest priority is to continue to put pressure wherever we can to try to get them out.

Q. But notwithstanding——

The President. Well, Mike, I can't have too much——

Q. On the second question, your objections are well aired, but do you feel a responsibility notwithstanding to move in that direction or help President-elect Trump move in that direction?

The President. I will help President Trump—President-elect Trump with any advice, counsel, information that we can provide so that he, once he's sworn in, can make a decision. Between now and then, these are decisions that I have to make based on the consultations I have with our military and the people who have been working this every single day.

Peter Alexander [NBC News].

2016 Presidential Election/Russia/Republican Party/President-Elect Donald J. Trump's Cabinet Nominations

Q. Mr. President, thank you very much. Can you, given all the intelligence that we have now heard, assure the public that this was, once and for all, a free and fair election? And specifically on Russia, do you feel any obligation now, as they've been insisting that this isn't the case, to show the proof, as it were? They say, put your money where your mouth is and declassify some of the intelligence, some of the evidence that exists. And more broadly, as it relates to Donald Trump on this very topic, are you concerned about his relationship with Vladimir Putin, especially given some of the recent Cabinet picks, including his selection for Secretary

of State, Rex Tillerson, who toasted Putin with champagne over oil deals together? Thank you.

The President. Okay. I may be getting older, because these multipart questions, I start losing track. [*Laughter*]

Q. Free and fair.

The President. I can assure the public that there was not the kind of tampering with the voting process that was of concern and will continue to be of concern going forward; that the votes that were cast were counted, they were counted appropriately. We have not seen evidence of machines being tampered with. So that assurance I can provide.

That doesn't mean that we find every single potential probe of every single voting machine all across the country, but we paid a lot of attention to it. We worked with State officials, et cetera, and we feel confident that that didn't occur and that the votes were cast and they were counted.

And so that's on that point. What was the second one?

Q. The second one was about declassification.

The President. Declassification. Look, we will provide evidence that we can safely provide that does not compromise sources and methods. But I'll be honest with you, when you're talking about cybersecurity, a lot of it is classified. And we're not going to provide it because the way we catch folks is by knowing certain things about them that they may not want us to know, and if we're going to monitor this stuff effectively going forward, we don't want them to know that we know.

So this is one of those situations where unless the American people genuinely think that the professionals in the CIA, the FBI, our entire intelligence infrastructure—many of whom, by the way, served in previous administrations and who are Republicans—are less trustworthy than the Russians, then people should pay attention to what our intelligence agencies say.

This is part of what I meant when I said that we've got to think about what's happening to our political culture here. The Russians can't change us or significantly weaken us. They are a smaller country. They are a weaker country. Their economy doesn't produce anything that anybody wants to buy, except oil and gas and arms. They don't innovate.

But they can impact us if we lose track of who we are. They can impact us if we abandon our values. Mr. Putin can weaken us, just like he's trying to weaken Europe, if we start buying into notions that it's okay to intimidate the press or lock up dissidents or discriminate against people because of their faith or what they look like.

And what I worry about more than anything is the degree to which, because of the fierceness of the partisan battle, you started to see certain folks in the Republican Party and Republican voters suddenly finding a Government and individuals who stand contrary to everything that we stand for as being okay because that's how much we dislike Democrats.

I mean, think about it. Some of the people who historically have been very critical of me for engaging with the Russians and having conversations with them also endorsed the President-elect, even as he was saying that we should stop sanctioning Russia and being tough on them and work together with them against our common enemies. He was very complimentary of Mr. Putin personally.

That wasn't news. The President-elect during the campaign said so. And some folks who had made a career out of being anti-Russian didn't say anything about it. And then, after the election, suddenly, they're asking, well, why didn't you tell us that maybe the Russians were trying to help our candidate? Well, come on. There was a survey, some of you saw, where—now, this is just one poll, but a pretty credible source—37 percent of Republican voters approve of Putin. Over a third of Republican voters approve of Vladimir Putin, the former head of the KGB. Ronald Reagan would roll over in his grave.

And how did that happen? It happened in part because, for too long, everything that happens in this town, everything that's said is seen through the lens of "does this help or hurt us relative to Democrats or relative to President Obama?" And unless that changes, we're going

to continue to be vulnerable to foreign influence, because we've lost track of what it is that we're about and what we stand for.

With respect to the President-elect's appointments, it is his prerogative, as I've always said, for him to appoint who he thinks can best carry out his foreign policy or his domestic policy. It is up to the Senate to advise and consent. There will be plenty of time for Members of the Senate to go through the record of all his appointees and determine whether or not they're appropriate for the job.

Martha Raddatz [ABC News].

2016 Presidential Election/Russia/Democratic National Committee/Cybersecurity

Q. Mr. President, I want to talk about Vladimir Putin again. Just to be clear, do you believe Vladimir Putin himself authorized the hack? And do you believe he authorized that to help Donald Trump? And on the intelligence, one of the things Donald Trump cites is Saddam Hussein and the weapons of mass destruction, and that they were never found. Can you say, unequivocally, that this was not China, that this was not a 400-pound guy sitting on his bed, as Donald Trump says? And do these types of tweets and kinds of statements from Donald Trump embolden the Russians?

The President. When the report comes out, before I leave office, that will have drawn together all the threads. And so I don't want to step on their work ahead of time.

What I can tell you is that the intelligence that I have seen gives me great confidence in their assessment that the Russians carried out this hack.

Q. Which hack?

The President. The hack of the DNC and the hack of John Podesta.

Now, the—but again, I think this is exactly why I want the report out so that everybody can review it. And this has been briefed, and the evidence in closed session has been provided on a bipartisan basis—not just to me, it's been provided to the leaders of the House and the Senate and the chairmen and ranking members of the relevant committees. And I think that what you've already seen is, at least some of the folks who have seen the evidence don't dispute, I think, the basic assessment that the Russians carried this out.

Q. But specifically, can you not say that——

The President. Well, Martha, I think what I want to make sure of is that I give the intelligence community the chance to gather all the information. But I'd make a larger point, which is, not much happens in Russia without Vladimir Putin. I mean, this is a pretty hierarchical operation. Last I checked, there's not a lot of debate and democratic deliberation, particularly when it comes to policies directed at the United States.

We have said, and I will confirm, that this happened at the highest levels of the Russian Government. And I will let you make that determination as to whether there are high-level Russian officials who go off rogue and decide to tamper with the U.S. election process without Vladimir Putin knowing about it.

Q. So I wouldn't be wrong in saying the President thinks Vladimir Putin authorized the hack?

The President. Martha, I've given you what I'm going to give you.

What was your second question? [*Laughter*]

President-Elect Donald J. Trump/Foreign Influence in U.S. Elections

Q. Do the tweets and do the statements by Donald Trump embolden Russia?

The President. Got it. As I said before, I think that the President-elect is still in transition mode from campaign to governance. I think he hasn't gotten his whole team together yet. He still has campaign spokespersons, sort of, filling in and appearing on cable shows. And there's just a whole different attitude and vibe when you're not in power as when you're in power.

So, rather than me, sort of, characterize the appropriateness or inappropriateness of what he's doing at the moment, I think what we have to see is how will the President-elect operate and how will his team operate when they've been fully briefed on all these issues, they have their hands on all the levers of

Government, and they've got to start making decisions.

One way I do believe that the President-elect can approach this that would be unifying is to say that we welcome a bipartisan, independent process that gives the American people an assurance not only that votes are counted properly, that the elections are fair and free, but that we have learned lessons about how Internet propaganda from foreign countries can be released into the political bloodstream and that we've got strategies to deal with it for the future.

The more this can be nonpartisan, the better served the American people are going to be, which is why I made the point earlier, and I'm going to keep on repeating this point: Our vulnerability to Russia or any other foreign power is directly related to how divided, partisan, dysfunctional our political process is. That's the thing that makes us vulnerable.

If fake news that's being released by some foreign government is almost identical to reports that are being issued through partisan news venues, then it's not surprising that that foreign propaganda will have a greater effect, because it doesn't seem that far fetched compared to some of the other stuff that folks are hearing from domestic propagandists.

To the extent that our political dialogue is such where everything is under suspicion, everybody is corrupt, and everybody is doing things for partisan reasons and all of our institutions are full of malevolent actors—if that's the storyline that's being put out there by whatever party is out of power, then when a foreign government introduces that same argument with facts that are made up, voters who have been listening to that stuff for years, who have been getting that stuff every day from talk radio or other venues, they're going to believe it.

So, if we want to really reduce foreign influence on our elections, then we'd better think about how to make sure that our political process, our political dialogue is stronger than it's been.

Mark Landler [New York Times].

U.S. Foreign Policy/China-U.S. Relations/President-Elect Donald J. Trump

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. I wonder whether I could move you from Russia to China for a moment.

The President. Absolutely. [*Laughter*]

Q. Your successor spoke by phone with the President of Taiwan the other day and declared subsequently that he wasn't sure why the United States needed to be bound by the One China policy. He suggested it could be used as a bargaining chip perhaps to get better terms on a trade deal or more cooperation on North Korea. There's already evidence that tensions between the two sides have increased a bit, and just today, the Chinese have evidently seized an underwater drone in the South China Sea. Do you agree, as some do, that our China policy could use a fresh set of eyes? And what's the big deal about having a short phone call with the President of Taiwan? Or do you worry that these types of unorthodox approaches are setting us on a collision course with perhaps our biggest geopolitical adversary?

The President. Well, that's a great question. I'm somewhere in between. I think all of our foreign policy should be subject to fresh eyes. I think one of the—I've said this before—I am very proud of the work I've done. I think I'm a better President now than when I started. But if you're here for 8 years in the bubble, you start seeing things a certain way, and you benefit from—the democracy benefits, America benefits from some new perspectives.

And I think it should be not just the prerogative, but the obligation of a new President, to examine everything that's been done and see what makes sense and what doesn't. That's what I did when I came in, and I'm assuming any new President is going to undertake those same exercises.

And given the importance of the relationship between the United States and China, given how much is at stake in terms of the world economy, national security, our presence in the Asia-Pacific, China's increasing role in international affairs—there's probably no bilat-

eral relationship that carries more significance and where there's also the potential if that relationship breaks down or goes into a full-conflict mode, that everybody is worse off. So I think it's fine for him to take a look at it.

What I've advised the President-elect is that across the board on foreign policy, you want to make sure that you're doing it in a systematic, deliberate, intentional way. And since there's only one President at a time, my advice to him has been that before he starts having a lot of interactions with foreign governments other than the usual courtesy calls, that he should want to have his full team in place, that he should want his team to be fully briefed on what's gone on in the past and where the potential pitfalls may be, where the opportunities are, what we've learned from 8 years of experience, so that as he's then maybe taking foreign policy in a new direction, he's got all the information to make good decisions and, by the way, that all of Government is moving at the same time and singing from the same hymnal.

And with respect to China—and let's just take the example of Taiwan—there has been a longstanding agreement, essentially, between China, the United States, and to some degree, the Taiwanese, which is to not change the status quo. Taiwan operates differently than mainline—mainland China does. China views Taiwan as part of China, but recognizes that it has to approach Taiwan as an entity that has its own ways of doing things. The Taiwanese have agreed that as long as they're able to continue to function with some degree of autonomy, that they won't charge forward and declare independence.

And that status quo, although not completely satisfactory to any of the parties involved, has kept the peace and allowed the Taiwanese to be a pretty successful and—economy and a people who have a high degree of self-determination. But understand, for China, the issue of Taiwan is as important as anything on their docket. The idea of one China is at the heart of their conception as a nation.

And so, if you are going to upend this understanding, you have to have thought through what are the consequences are, because the Chinese will not treat that the way they'll treat some other issues. They won't even treat it the way they treat issues around the South China Sea, where we've had a lot of tensions. This goes to the core of how they see themselves. And their reaction on this issue could end up being very significant.

That doesn't mean that you have to adhere to everything that's been done in the past. It does mean that you've got to think it through and have planned for potential reactions that they may engage in.

All right. Isaac Dovere of Politico.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Two questions on where this all leaves us. First——

The President. What leaves us? Where my Presidency leaves us?

Q. The election——

The President. It leaves us in a really good spot—[*laughter*]—if we make some good decisions going forward.

Democratic National Committee/2016 Presidential Election/Electoral College/The President's Legacy

Q. Well, what do you say to the electors who are going to meet on Monday and are thinking of changing their votes? Do you think that they should be giving—given an intelligence briefing about the Russian activity? Or should they bear in mind everything you've said and is out already? Should they—should votes be bound by the State votes as they've gone? And long term, do you think that there is a need for electoral college reform that would tie it to the popular vote?

The President. Okay. It sounded like two, but that was all one. [*Laughter*]

Q. It was all one. [*Laughter*] You know the way this goes around here.

The President. I love how these, like, I've got two questions; each one has four parts. [*Laughter*]

Q. On the Democratic Party, your Labor Secretary is running for—to be the chair of the Democratic National Committee.

The President. Yes.

Q. Is the vision that you've seen him putting forward what you think the party needs to be focused on? And what do you say to some of

the complaints that say the future of the Democratic Party shouldn't be a continuation of some of your political approach? Part of that is complaints that decisions that you've made as President, as the leader of the party, have structurally weakened the DNC and the Democratic Party, and they think that that has led to—or has helped lead to some losses in elections around the country. Do you regret any of those decisions?

The President. Okay.

Q. Those are my two. [*Laughter*]

The President. Good. I'll take the second one first and say that Tom Perez has been, I believe, one of the best Secretaries of Labor in our history. He is tireless. He is wicked smart. He has been able to work across the spectrum of labor, business, activists. He's produced. I mean, if you look at his body of work on behalf of working people, what he's pushed for in terms of making sure that workers get a fair deal, decent wages, better benefits, that their safety is protected on the job—he has been extraordinary.

Now, others who have declared are also my friends and are fine people as well. And the great thing is, I don't have a vote in this, so we'll let the process unfold. I don't think it's going to happen anytime soon. I described to you earlier what I think needs to happen, which is that the Democratic Party, whether that's entirely through the DNC or through a rebuilding of State parties or some other arrangement, has to work at the grassroots level, has to be present in all 50 States, has to have a presence in counties, has to think about message and how are we speaking directly to voters.

I will say this—and I'm not going to engage in too much punditry—but that I could not be prouder of the coalition that I put together in my—each of my campaigns because it was inclusive and it drew in people who normally weren't interested in politics and didn't participate. But I'd like to think—I think I can show—that in those elections, I always cast a broad net. I always said, first and foremost, we're Americans, that we have a common creed, that there's more that we share than divides us, and I want to talk to everybody and get a chance to get everybody's vote.

I still believe what I said in 2004, which is this red State/blue thing is a construct. Now, it is a construct that has gotten more and more powerful for a whole lot of reasons, from gerrymandering to big money, to the way that the media has splintered. And so people are just watching what reinforces their existing biases as opposed to having to listen to different points of view. So there are all kinds of reasons for it.

But outside of the realm of electoral politics, I still see people the way I saw them when I made that speech—full of contradictions, and there are some regional differences, but basically, folks care about their families, they care about having meaningful work, they care about making sure their kids have more opportunity than they did. They want to be safe; they want to feel like things are fair. And whoever leads the DNC and any candidate with the Democratic brand going forward, I want them to feel as if they can reach out and find that common ground and speak to all of America. And that requires some organization.

And you're right that—and I said this in my earlier remarks—that what I was able to do during my campaigns, I wasn't able to do during midterms. It's not that we didn't put in time and effort into it. I spent time and effort into it, but the coalition I put together didn't always turn out to be transferable. And the challenge is that—you know, some of that just has to do with the fact that when you're in the party in power and people are going through hard times like they were in 2010, they're going to punish, to some degree, the President's party regardless of what organizational work is done.

Some of it has to do with just some deep-standing traditional challenges for Democrats, like during off-year elections, the electorate is older, and we do better with a younger electorate. But we know those things are true, we just—and I didn't crack the code on that. And if other people have ideas about how to do that even better, I'm all for it.

So, on your—with respect to the electors, I'm not going to wade into that issue because, again, it's the American people's job, and now the electors' job, to decide my successor. It is not my job to decide my successor. And I have provided people with a lot of information about what happened during the course of the election. But more importantly, the candidates themselves, I think, talked about their beliefs and their vision for America. The President-elect, I think, has been very explicit about what he cares about and what he believes in. And so it's not in my hands now; it's up to them.

Q. What about long-term about the electoral college?

The President. Long-term with respect to the electoral college, the electoral college is a vestige, it's a carryover from an earlier vision of how our Federal Government was going to work that put a lot of premium on States, and it used to be that the Senate was not elected directly, it was through State legislatures. And it's the same type of thinking that gives Wyoming two Senators and—with about half a million people, and California with 33 million get the same two.

So there are some structures in our political system, as envisioned by the Founders, that sometimes are going to disadvantage Democrats. But the truth of the matter is, is that, if we have a strong message, if we're speaking to what the American people care about, typically, the popular vote and the electoral college vote will align.

And I guess part of my overall message here, as I leave for the holidays, is that if we look for one explanation or one silver bullet or one easy fix for our politics, then we're probably going to be disappointed. There are just a lot of factors in what's happened not just over the last few months, but over the last decade, that has made both politics and governance more challenging. And I think everybody has raised legitimate questions and legitimate concerns.

I do hope that we all just take some time, take a breath—this is certainly what I'm going to advise Democrats—to just reflect a little bit more about, how can we get to a place where people are focused on working together based on at least some common set of facts? How can we have a conversation about policy that doesn't demonize each other? How can we channel what I think is the basic decency and goodness of the American people so it reflects itself in our politics, as opposed to it being so polarized and so nasty that, in some cases, you have voters and elected officials who have more confidence and faith in a foreign adversary than they have in their neighbors?

And those go to some bigger issues. How is it that we have some voters or some elected officials who think that Michelle Obama's healthy eating initiative and school nutrition program is a greater threat to democracy than our Government going after the press if they're issuing a story they don't like? Right? I mean, that's an issue that I think we've got to wrestle with, and we will.

People have asked me, how do you feel after the election and so forth, and I say, well, look, this is a clarifying moment. It's a useful reminder that voting counts, politics counts. What the President-elect is going to be doing is going to be very different than what I was doing, and I think people will be able to compare and contrast and make judgments about what worked for the American people.

And I hope that, building off the progress we've made, that what the President-elect is proposing works. What I can say with confidence is that what we've done works. Now, that I can prove. I can show you where we were in 2008, and I can show you where we are now, and you can't argue that we're not better off. We are. And for that, I thank the American people and, more importantly, I thank—well, not more importantly, as importantly—I was going to say Josh Earnest for doing such a great job as—[*laughter*]. For that, I thank the American people. I thank the men and women in uniform who serve. I haven't gotten to the point yet where I've been overly sentimental.

I will tell you, when I was doing my last Christmas party photoline—many of you have participated in these; they're pretty long—[*laughter*]—right at the end of the line, the President's Marine Corps Band comes in, those who had been performing,

and I take a picture with them, and it was the last time that I was going to take a picture with my Marine Corps Band after an event, and I got a little choked up. Now, I was in front of marines, so I had to, like, tamp it down. [*Laughter*]

But it was just one small example of all the people who have contributed to our success. I'm responsible for where we've screwed up. The successes are widely shared with all the amazing people who have been part of this administration. Okay?

Thank you, everybody. *Mele Kalikimaka.*

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 2:40 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to President Bashar al-Asad of Syria; former Counselor to the President John D. Podesta, in his capacity as campaign chairman for 2016 Democratic Presidential nominee Clinton; and Physician to the President and Chief White House Physician Ronny L. Jackson. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. Reporters referred to Rex W. Tillerson, chairman and chief executive officer, ExxonMobil; and President Tsai Ing-wen of Taiwan.

Statement on Signing the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act

December 16, 2016

Today I am signing the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act into law. It authorizes vital water projects across the country to restore watersheds, improve waterways and flood control, and improve drinking water infrastructure. The law also authorizes $170 million for communities facing drinking water emergencies, including funding for Flint, Michigan, to recover from the lead contamination in its drinking water system. That help for Flint is a priority of this administration. WINN also includes four Indian water rights settlements that resolve longstanding claims to water and the conflicts surrounding those claims, address the needs of native communities, fulfill the Federal trust responsibility to American Indians, and provide a sound base for greater economic development for both the affected tribes and their non-Indian neighbors.

Title III, subtitle J, of the law has both short-term and long-term provisions related to addressing the continuing drought in California. In the long term, it invests in a number of water projects to promote water storage and supply, flood control, desalination, and water recycling. These projects will help assure that California is more resilient in the face of growing water demands and drought-based uncertainty.

Title III, subtitle J, also includes short-term provisions governing operations of the Federal and State water projects under the Endangered Species Act for up to 5 years, regardless of drought condition. Building on the work of previous administrations, my administration has worked closely with the State of California and other affected parties to address the critical elements of California's complex water challenges by accommodating the needs and concerns of California water users and the important species that depend on that same water. This important partnership has helped us achieve a careful balance based on existing State and Federal law. It is essential that it not be undermined by anyone who seeks to override that balance by misstating or incorrectly reading the provisions of subtitle J. Consistent with the legislative history supporting these provisions, I interpret and understand subtitle J to require continued application and implementation of the Endangered Species Act, consistent with the close and cooperative work of Federal agencies with the State of California to assure that State water quality standards are met. This reading of the short-term operational provisions carries out the letter and spirit of the law and is essential for continuing the cooperation and commitment to accommodating

the full range of complex and important interests in matters related to California water.

NOTE: S. 612, approved December 16, was assigned Public Law No. 114–322.

Statement on the 80th Birthday of Pope Francis
December 16, 2016

As he marks his 80th birthday tomorrow, I join the American people in extending our best wishes to His Holiness Pope Francis. In both word and deed, Pope Francis has inspired people around the world with his message of compassion, hope, and peace. He has called on us to see ourselves in one another, reach out to those who are at the margins of society, extend mercy, and care for the planet we all share. It was my great honor to welcome His Holiness to the White House last year and to work together on common causes. I remain especially grateful for his invaluable support for our work to normalize relations between the United States and Cuba, which I announced on December 17, 2 years ago. Guided by his humble example, may the people of the world move forward together toward true justice and peace for all God's children.

Statement on Signing the Ensuring Access to Pacific Fisheries Act
December 16, 2016

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 6452, the "Ensuring Access to Pacific Fisheries Act," which implements the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean, the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean, and the amendments to the Convention on Future Multilateral Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries. I recommended that the Senate give its advice and consent to the ratification of all of these treaties because they will help promote sound fishery management; enable us to better combat illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing; and prevent destructive fishing practices and contribute to the long-term conservation and sustainable use of fisheries resources on the high seas. I appreciate the efforts of the Congress to ensure that the United States can contribute to these international efforts.

The bill provides that the United States will be represented on the North Pacific Fisheries Commission by five commissioners—two appointed by the President, and the three chairpersons of the North Pacific, Pacific, and Western Pacific Fishery Management Councils, who are selected by the members of those Councils. Because the commissioners have the authority to speak on behalf of the United States before an international body, they are diplomatic officers. The Constitution grants the President the exclusive authority to represent and to decide who else will represent the United States in foreign relations. Allowing the regional fishery management chairpersons to represent the United States on the North Pacific Fisheries Commission would raise constitutional concerns. The executive branch will develop an approach to treat this provision of the statute in a manner that mitigates the constitutional concerns while adhering closely to the intent of the Congress.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
December 16, 2016.

NOTE: H.R. 6452, approved December 16, was assigned Public Law No. 114–327.

The President's Weekly Address
December 17, 2016

Hi, everybody. If you've ever played a game of basketball in a gym or entered a contest in school or started a small business in your hometown, you know that competition is a good thing. It pushes us to do our best. And you know that a fight is only fair when everybody has a chance to win, when the playing field is level for everybody and the rules are clear and consistent.

That's important to our consumers, our workers, our employers, and our farmers. You deserve a fair shake, even though there might be much bigger players in the market. Without a truly competitive marketplace, those big companies can raise costs or slack off on offering good service or keep their workers' wages too low. And in an era when large corporations often merge to form even larger ones, our leaders have an even greater responsibility to look out for us as consumers.

To keep America's economy growing and America's businesses thriving, we need to protect the principle of fair competition. That's not, by the way, a Democratic idea or a Republican idea, it is an American idea, because it's the best way to make sure the best ideas rise to the top.

My administration has done a lot to keep the marketplace fair. We defended a free, open, and accessible Internet that doesn't let service providers pick winners and losers. We cracked down on conflicts of interest by making sure professionals who give your retirement advice do so in your best interests, not in theirs. And in the last few months, we've made even more progress.

This week, my Department of Agriculture took major steps to protect farmers from unfair treatment by bigger processors. These rules will help swine, beef cattle, and especially poultry growers who have fewer choices in where they sell their products.

This month, the FDA started taking steps to make hearing aids more affordable for more than the nearly 30 million Americans suffering from the frustration of hearing loss. We think people with moderate hearing loss should be able to buy a hearing aid over the counter as easily as you can buy reading glasses at your local pharmacy.

This year, we also addressed two other problems that keep workers and wages down: the overuse of noncompete agreements that hurt workers in the job market and the unfair practices of companies that collude to set wages below the market rate. And we backed new steps, including a law I just signed to fight robot scalpers that artificially drive up ticket prices and a rule that requires airlines to reimburse your baggage fees if your bags don't make it to your destination when you do.

Finally, it's this principle of competition that's at the very heart of our health reform. In fact, it's the reason we call it the Affordable Care Act; it makes insurance companies compete for your business, which is helping millions afford the care that helps them get and stay healthy. By the way, it's open enrollment season right now. You can still sign up on healthcare.gov until January 31 and get covered for 2017.

Our free market economy only works when there's competition. And competition only works when rules are in place to keep it fair and open and honest. Whether you're building the next big thing or just want to be treated right as a customer, that's good for you, and it's good for the country.

Thanks, everybody, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:30 p.m. on December 16 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on December 17. In the address, the President referred to S. 3183, the Better Online Ticket Sales Act of 2016, which was approved December 14 and assigned Public Law No. 114–274. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 16, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on December 17. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the Withdrawal of Certain Areas in the Arctic and Atlantic Oceans on the Outer Continental Shelf From Mineral Leasing
December 20, 2016

Today, in partnership with our neighbors and allies in Canada, the United States is taking historic steps to build a strong Arctic economy, preserve a healthy Arctic ecosystem, and protect our fragile Arctic waters, including designating the bulk of our Arctic water and certain areas in the Atlantic Ocean as indefinitely off limits to future oil and gas leasing.

These actions, and Canada's parallel actions, protect a sensitive and unique ecosystem that is unlike any other region on Earth. They reflect the scientific assessment that, even with the high safety standards that both our countries have put in place, the risks of an oil spill in this region are significant, and our ability to clean up from a spill in the region's harsh conditions is limited. By contrast, it would take decades to fully develop the production infrastructure necessary for any large-scale oil and gas leasing production in the region, at a time when we need to continue to move decisively away from fossil fuels.

In 2015, just 0.1 percent of U.S. Federal offshore crude production came from the Arctic, and Department of Interior analysis shows that, at current oil prices, significant production in the Arctic will not occur. That's why looking forward, we must continue to focus on economic empowerment for Arctic communities beyond this one sector. My administration has proposed and directed unprecedented Federal investments in the region, but more must be done—by the Federal Government, the private sector, and philanthropy—to enhance infrastructure and our collective security, such as the acquisition of additional ice-breaking capacity, and to lay the groundwork for economic growth in the industries of the future.

NOTE: The Office of the Press Secretary released two Department of the Interior maps of the designated areas and accompanying fact sheets with this statement.

Joint Statement—United States-Canada Joint Arctic Leaders' Statement
December 20, 2016

In March, President Obama and Prime Minister Trudeau announced a new partnership to embrace opportunities and confront challenges in the changing Arctic, with Indigenous and Northern partnerships, and responsible, science-based leadership. Over the past year, both countries have engaged a range of partners and stakeholders, including Indigenous peoples and Northern communities, state, provincial and territorial governments, nongovernmental organizations and businesses. Those consulted have expressed a strong desire for real and long-term opportunities to build strong families, communities, and robust economies. Today, President Obama and Prime Minister Trudeau are proud to launch actions ensuring a strong, sustainable and viable Arctic economy and ecosystem, with low-impact shipping, science based management of marine resources, and free from the future risks of offshore oil and gas activity. Together, these actions set the stage for deeper partnerships with other Arctic nations, including through the Arctic Council.

Science-based approach to oil and gas:

In March, the United States and Canada committed that commercial activities will occur only if the highest safety and environmental standards are met, and if they are consistent with national and global climate and environmental goals. Today—due to the important, irreplaceable values of its Arctic waters for Indigenous, Alaska Native and local communities' subsistence and cultures, wildlife and

wildlife habitat, and scientific research; the vulnerability of these ecosystems to an oil spill; and the unique logistical, operational, safety, and scientific challenges and risks of oil extraction and spill response in Arctic waters—the United States is designating the vast majority of U.S. waters in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas as indefinitely off limits to offshore oil and gas leasing, and Canada will designate all Arctic Canadian waters as indefinitely off limits to future offshore Arctic oil and gas licensing, to be reviewed every five years through a climate and marine science-based life-cycle assessment.[i]

Supporting strong Arctic communities:

In March, both countries committed to defining new approaches and exchanging best practices to strengthen the resilience of Arctic communities and continuing to support the well-being of Arctic residents, in particular respecting the rights and territory of Indigenous peoples.

Recently, in direct response to requests from Alaska Native communities, President Obama created the Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience Area protecting the cultural and subsistence resources of over 80 tribes as well as one of the largest seasonal migrations of marine mammals in the world of bowhead and beluga whales, walrus, ice seals, and sea birds. The United States also launched an interagency Economic Development Assessment Team in the Nome region of Alaska to identify future investment opportunities, with other regions to follow. In addition, the Arctic Funders Collaborative (AFC), a group of 11 U.S., Canadian, and international philanthropic foundations, announced the coordination and mobilization of an estimated $27 million in resources for programs across the Arctic over the next three years.

Today, for its part, Canada is committing to co-develop a new Arctic Policy Framework, with Northerners, territorial and Provincial governments, and First Nations, Inuit, and Métis People that will replace Canada's Northern Strategy. The Framework will include priority areas identified by the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs' Special Representative, such as education, infrastructure, and economic development. The Framework will include an Inuit-specific component, created in partnership with Inuit, as Inuit Nunangat comprises over a third of Canada's land mass and over half of Canada's coast line, and as Inuit modern treaties govern this jurisdictional space. In parallel, Canada is reducing the reliance of Northern communities on diesel, by deploying energy efficiency and renewable power. Canada will also, with Indigenous and Northern partners, explore how to support and protect the future of the Arctic Ocean's "last ice area" where summer ice remains each year.

Low impact shipping corridors:

In March, the United States and Canada committed to working together to establish consistent policies for ships operating in the region. Today, both countries are launching the first processes ever to identify sustainable shipping lanes throughout their connected Arctic waters, in collaboration with Northern and Indigenous partners. The U.S. Coast Guard is launching a Port Access Route Study (PARS) in the Beaufort and

[i] Taking into account the respective obligations of the United States and Canada under international law to protect and preserve the marine environment, these steps also support the goals of various international frameworks and commitments concerning pollution, including those reflected in the 1990 International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response, and Cooperation, the 2013 Agreement on Cooperation on Marine Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response in the Arctic, and the U.S.-Canada Joint Marine Pollution Contingency Plan. Furthermore, with respect to areas of the Beaufort Sea where the U.S.-Canada maritime boundary has not yet been agreed, these practical arrangements are without prejudice to either side's position and demonstrate self-restraint, taking into account the principle of making every effort not to jeopardize or hamper reaching a final maritime boundary agreement.

Chukchi Seas.[ii] Results from this analysis may be used to establish vessel routing measures including traffic separation schemes, recommended routes, Areas To Be Avoided, or other instruments such as fairways where no structures may be erected. The Canadian Coast Guard and Transport Canada is implementing Northern Marine Transportation Corridors, determining what infrastructure and navigational and emergency response services are needed. Canada is also launching a new program to support training curriculum for Northerners, particularly Indigenous peoples, to join the marine field, as well as programming to support marine infrastructure and safety equipment for communities.

In addition, the U.S. Coast Guard, in consultation with industry, Indigenous communities, and the State of Alaska, has begun a strategy to phase down the use of Heavy Fuel Oil (HFO) in the Arctic. The Canadian Coast Guard is conducting similar outreach and consultations to develop proposals to phase down the use of HFO in 2017. The United States and Canada will each, or jointly, propose a plan for consideration at the International Maritime Organization's spring 2017 meeting.

Science-based management of Arctic fisheries:

In March, the United States and Canada called for a binding international agreement to prevent the opening of unregulated fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean and to build on a precautionary, science-based approach to commercial fishing that both countries have put in place in their Arctic waters. Today, the United States commits to supporting and strengthening existing commercial fishing closures in the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas, and to conducting scientific research to improve our understanding of the Arctic. Canada commits to working with Northern and Indigenous communities to build world-leading and abundant Arctic fisheries—based on science—that firstly benefit Northern communities. Together, the United States' and Canada's actions will create the largest contiguous area of well-regulated fisheries in the world.

Both countries reaffirm their commitment to a legally binding agreement to prevent unregulated commercial fisheries in the Arctic High Seas until an internationally recognized Regional Fishery Management Organization is in place to provide effective management. Both countries are working towards such an agreement in the coming months.

NOTE: The joint statement referred to the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs' Special Representative on the Arctic Mary Simon of Canada. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Memorandum on Withdrawal of Certain Portions of the United States Arctic Outer Continental Shelf From Mineral Leasing
December 20, 2016

Memorandum for the Secretary of the Interior

Subject: Withdrawal of Certain Portions of the United States Arctic Outer Continental Shelf from Mineral Leasing

Consistent with principles of responsible public stewardship entrusted to this office, with due consideration of (1) the important, irreplaceable values of the Chukchi Sea and portions of the Beaufort Sea for marine mammals, other wildlife, wildlife habitat, scientific research, and Alaska Native subsistence use; (2) the vulnerability of these ecosystems to an oil spill; and (3) the unique logistical, operational,

[ii] In conducting this study, and consistent with existing authorities, the Coast Guard will consider traditional knowledge from local communities, the effects of shipping and vessel pollution on the marine environment, marine mammal migratory pathways and other biologically important areas, subsistence whaling, hunting, and fishing, and the needs of maritime safety and commerce.

safety, and scientific challenges and risks of oil extraction and spill response in these Arctic waters, as described in the report of the Arctic Executive Steering Committee Task Force on oil spill response, chaired by the U.S. Coast Guard, I hereby direct as follows:

Under the authority granted to me in section 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, 43 U.S.C. 1341(a), I hereby withdraw from disposition by leasing for a time period without specific expiration the following areas of the Outer Continental Shelf: (1) the area designated by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management as the Chukchi Sea Planning Area that is not currently withdrawn; and (2) the area designated by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management as the Beaufort Sea Planning Area that is not currently withdrawn except for those Outer Continental Shelf nearshore lease blocks identified in the attached table. The boundaries of the withdrawn areas are more specifically delineated in the attached map, excepting only the Outer Continental Shelf lease blocks in the Beaufort Sea Planning Area listed as "not withdrawn" in the accompanying table. Both the map and table form a part of this memorandum, with the lease blocks in the table governing the boundaries of the area not included in the withdrawal of the Beaufort Sea Planning Area. The withdrawal directed by this memorandum prevents consideration of withdrawn areas for any mineral leasing for purposes of exploration, development, or production.

Nothing in this withdrawal affects rights under existing leases in the withdrawn areas.

BARACK OBAMA

Memorandum on Withdrawal of Certain Areas off the Atlantic Coast on the Outer Continental Shelf From Mineral Leasing

December 20, 2016

Memorandum for the Secretary of the Interior

Subject: Withdrawal of Certain Areas off the Atlantic Coast on the Outer Continental Shelf from Mineral Leasing

Consistent with principles of responsible public stewardship entrusted to this office, with due consideration of the critical importance of canyons along the edge of the Atlantic continental shelf for marine mammals, deep water corals, other wildlife, and wildlife habitat, and to ensure that the unique resources associated with these canyons remain available for future generations, I hereby direct as follows:

Under the authority granted to me in section 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, 43 U.S.C. 1341(a), I hereby withdraw from disposition by leasing for a time period without specific expiration the areas of the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) associated with 26 major canyons and canyon complexes offshore the Atlantic coast lying within areas currently designated by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management as the North Atlantic and Mid-Atlantic Planning Areas. The boundaries are delineated in the attached map and accompanying table of OCS blocks. Both the map and the table form a part of this memorandum. This withdrawal prevents consideration of this area for any future mineral leasing for purposes of exploration, development, or production.

Nothing in this withdrawal affects rights under existing leases in the withdrawn areas.

BARACK OBAMA

Statement on Signing the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017

December 23, 2016

Today, I have signed into law S. 2943, the "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017." This Act authorizes fiscal year 2017 appropriations principally for the Department of Defense and for Department of Energy national security programs, provides vital benefits for military personnel and their families, and includes authorities to facilitate ongoing operations around the globe. It continues many critical authorizations necessary to ensure that we are able to sustain our momentum in countering the threat posed by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant and to reassure our European allies, as well as many new authorizations that, among other things, provide the Departments of Defense and Energy more flexibility in countering cyber-attacks and our adversaries' use of unmanned aerial vehicles.

I note that section 923 of the Act requires that the President establish a unified combatant command for cyber operations forces, while section 1642 prohibits the Secretary of Defense from terminating the "dual-hat" arrangement under which the Commander of U.S. Cyber Command (CYBERCOM) also serves as the Director of the National Security Agency (NSA), unless the Secretary and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff jointly certify that ending this arrangement will not pose risks to the military effectiveness of CYBERCOM that are unacceptable to the national security interests of the United States. Although I appreciate the Congress's interest in strengthening our Nation's cyber capabilities and ensuring that the NSA and CYBERCOM are best positioned to confront the array of cyber threats we face, I do not support these provisions as drafted: the Congress should leave decisions about the establishment of combatant commands to the executive branch and should not place unnecessary and bureaucratic administrative burdens and conditions on ending the dual-hat arrangement at a time when the speed and nature of cyber threats requires agility in making decisions about how best to organize and manage the Nation's cyber capabilities. That said, after directing a comprehensive review of this issue earlier this year, and consistent with the views of the Secretary of Defense and the Director of National Intelligence, I strongly support elevating CYBERCOM to a unified combatant command and ending the dual-hat arrangement for NSA and CYBERCOM—a position my Administration has communicated to the incoming Administration. While the dual-hat arrangement was once appropriate in order to enable a fledgling CYBERCOM to leverage NSA's advanced capabilities and expertise, CYBERCOM has since matured and the current construct should be replaced through a deliberate, conditions-based approach to separating the organizations. The two organizations should have separate leaders who are able to devote themselves to each organization's respective mission and responsibilities, but should continue to leverage the shared capabilities and synergies developed under the dual-hat arrangement. To these ends, the Department of Defense and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence have taken steps to ensure that separation would occur in a phased manner that enables NSA to continue to provide vital operational support to CYBERCOM during a transition period.

Beyond these provisions, I remain deeply concerned about the Congress's use of the National Defense Authorization Act to impose extensive organizational changes on the Department of Defense, disregarding the advice of the Department's senior civilian and uniformed leaders. The extensive changes in the bill are rushed, the consequences poorly understood, and they come at a particularly inappropriate time as we undertake a transition between administrations. These changes not only impose additional administrative burdens on the Department of Defense and make it less agile, but they also create additional bureaucracies and operational restrictions that

generate inefficiencies at a time when we need to be more efficient.

My Administration has similar concerns with the Administrative Leave Act, which would limit the period of time for which an employee of the Federal Government may be put on administrative leave. The provision substantially limits Federal agencies' discretion and is administratively burdensome, raising the risk of harm to the safety of Government employees and the risk of loss or damage to Government properties. Further, for the Intelligence Community, the Act creates unacceptable counterintelligence and security risks.

I am also disappointed that the Congress again failed to enact meaningful reforms to divest unneeded force structure, reduce wasteful overhead, and modernize military healthcare. Instead, the Congress redirects funding needed to support the warfighter to fund additional end-strength that our military leaders have not requested at a time when our troops are engaged overseas supporting the fight against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant and against al-Qa'ida. This approach hides the long-term costs of the Congress's authorizations, imposes significant costs in FY 2017 and substantially more over the next 5 years, and exacerbates the budgetary pressures already facing our military. Increasing force structure without adequate funding support in the base budget is dangerous; it will degrade, not enhance, readiness and modernization, contrary to our senior civilian and military leaders' priorities.

Once again, the Congress has also failed to take action toward closing the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. As I have said before, spending hundreds of millions of dollars, year after year, to keep fewer than sixty men in an isolated detention facility in Cuba is not consistent with our interests as a Nation and undermines our standing in the world. It weakens our national security by draining resources, damaging our relationships with key allies and partners, and emboldening violent extremists.

In February, my Administration submitted a comprehensive plan to safely and responsibly close the detention facility. Rather than answer that call and work with my Administration to finally bring this chapter of our history to a close, this bill aims to make the facility a permanent feature of our struggle against terrorism. During my Administration, we have responsibly transferred over 175 detainees from Guantanamo, and the population once held at the facility has now been reduced from 242 to 59. In the last 2 years, we have transferred 73 detainees, and our efforts to transfer additional detainees will continue until the last day I am in office. It is long past time for the Congress to lift the restrictions it has imposed, work to responsibly and safely close the facility, and remove this blot on our national honor. Unless the Congress changes course, it will be judged harshly by history.

As I have said in the past, the restrictions contained in this bill concerning the detention facility at Guantanamo are unwarranted and counterproductive. In particular, section 1033 renews the bar against using appropriated funds to construct or modify any facility in the United States, its territories, or possessions to house any Guantanamo detainee in the custody or under the control of the Department of Defense unless authorized by the Congress. Section 1032 also renews the bar against using appropriated funds to transfer Guantanamo detainees into the United States for any purpose. The bill leaves in place onerous restrictions on the transfer of detainees to foreign countries, and section 1034 imposes additional restrictions on foreign transfers of detainees—in some cases purporting to bar such transfers entirely.

As I have said repeatedly, the provisions in this bill concerning detainee transfers would, in certain circumstances, violate constitutional separation of powers principles. Additionally, section 1034 could in some circumstances interfere with the ability to transfer a detainee who has been granted a writ of habeas corpus. In the event that the restrictions on the transfer of detainees in sections 1032 and 1034 operate in a manner that violates these constitutional principles, my Administration will implement them in a manner that avoids the constitutional conflict.

My Administration strongly supports the bill's structural reform of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), which streamlines BBG operations and reduces inefficiencies, while retaining the longstanding statutory firewall, protecting against interference with and maintaining the professional independence of the agency's journalists and broadcasters and thus their credibility as sources of independent news and information. Section 1288 would elevate the current Chief Executive Officer of the Broadcasting Board of Governors to the head of the agency and reduce the current members of the Board, unless on expired terms, from serving as the collective head of the agency to serving as advisors to the Chief Executive Officer. While my Administration supports the empowerment of a Chief Executive Officer with the authority to carry out the BBG's important functions, the manner of transition prescribed by section 1288 raises constitutional concerns related to my appointments and removal authority. My Administration will devise a plan to treat this provision in a manner that mitigates the constitutional concerns while adhering closely to the Congress's intent.

Several other provisions in the bill also raise constitutional concerns.

First, section 507 of the bill would authorize certain cabinet officials to "drop from the rolls" military officers without my approval. The Constitution does not allow Congress to authorize other members of the executive branch to remove presidentially appointed officers, so I will direct my cabinet members to construe the statute as permitting them to remove the commission of a military officer only if the officer accepts their decision or I approve the removal.

Second, section 553 of the bill would establish a commission, composed primarily of members appointed by the Congress, in the executive branch. Because the commission contains legislative branch appointees, it cannot be located in the executive branch consistent with the separation of powers. My Administration will therefore treat the commission as an independent entity, separate from the executive branch.

Finally, section 1263(d) purports to require me to determine whether a foreign person has committed a sanctionable human rights violation when I receive a request to do so from certain members of Congress. Consistent with the constitutional separation of powers, which limit the Congress's ability to dictate how the executive branch executes the law, I will maintain my discretion to decline to act on such requests when appropriate.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
December 23, 2016.

NOTE: S. 2943, approved December 23, was assigned Public Law No. 114–328.

The President's Weekly Address
December 24, 2016

The President. Merry Christmas, everybody! One of the best parts of the holiday season is spending time with the special people in your life. And for me, that means getting some help from my best friend for our annual Christmas Weekly Address.

The First Lady. Now, given how our first Christmas Weekly Address went, I realized that Barack needed all the help he could get. [*Laughter*]

[*At this point, an outtake from the President's December 24, 2009, Weekly Address video recording was shown, in which the First Lady spoke as follows.*]

The First Lady. This is our first Christmas in the White House, and we——

[*In the outtake, the President began to laugh, and the First Lady continued as follows.*]

The First Lady. What? Stop. What? You know—what? You've got to stop it. All right?

[*The President continued to laugh.*]

The First Lady. You've got to get it together. You're going to have to pull it together, POTUS.

[*The outtake concluded, and the First Lady spoke as follows.*]

The First Lady. [*Laughter*] Celebrating the holidays in the White House over these past 8 years has been a true privilege. We've been able to welcome over half a million guests. Our outstanding pastry chefs have baked 200,000 holiday cookies——

The President. That's a lot of cookies.

The First Lady. ——and Barack has treated the American people to countless dad jokes.

The President. They're great jokes.

The First Lady. Not so funny.

The President. Although a few got a "Frosty" reception.

The First Lady. The last one.

The President. Ha-ha-ha.

The First Lady. This year's White House holiday theme is "The Gift of the Holidays," and our decorations reflect some of our greatest gifts as a nation: from our incredible military families to the life-changing impact of a great education.

The President. And the greatest gift that Michelle and I have received over the last 8 years has been the honor of serving as your President and First Lady. Together, we fought our way back from the worst recession in 80 years and got unemployment to a 9-year low. We secured health insurance for another 20 million Americans and new protections for folks who already had insurance. We made America more respected around the world, took on the mantle of leadership in the fight to protect this planet for our kids, and much, much more.

By so many measures, our country is stronger and more prosperous than it was when we first got here. And I'm hopeful we'll build on the progress we've made together in the years to come.

Tomorrow, for the final time as the First Family, we will join our fellow Christians around the world to rejoice in the birth of our Savior. And as we retell His story from that Holy Night, we'll also remember His eternal message, one of boundless love, compassion, and hope.

The First Lady. The idea that we are our brother's keeper and our sister's keeper. That we should treat others as we would want to be treated. That we care for the sick, feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, no matter where they come from or how they practice their faith.

The President. Those are values that help guide not just my family's Christian faith, but that of Jewish Americans and Muslim Americans, nonbelievers and Americans of all backgrounds. And no one better embodies that spirit of service than the men and women who wear our country's uniform and their families.

The First Lady. As always, many of our troops are far from home this time of the year, and their families are serving and sacrificing right along with them. Their courage and dedication allow the rest of us to enjoy this season. That's why we've tried to serve them as well as they've served this country. Go to joiningforces.gov to see how you can honor and support the servicemembers, veterans, and military families in your community, not just during the holidays, but all year round.

The President. So, as we look forward to the new year, let's resolve to recommit ourselves to the values we share. And on behalf of all the Obamas—Michelle, Malia, Sasha, Bo, and that troublemaker Sunny—Merry Christmas, everybody.

The First Lady. And we wish you and your family a happy and healthy 2017. Thanks, and God bless.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:25 p.m. on December 16 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on December 24. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 23, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on December 24. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii
December 25, 2016

The President. Hello, everybody! Merry Christmas!

Audience members. Merry Christmas!

The President. Aloha! *Mele Kalikimaka!*

Audience members. Aloha!

The President. Thank you so much. Well, I just want to, first of all, thank Colonel Killeen and General Cavanaugh and Sergeant Major Hall and all of you for the unbelievable service that you have rendered our country. This is one of our favorite things to do, because it's one of those circumstances where we get a chance to not just say thank you to our incredible men and women in uniform, but oftentimes, we also get a chance to see some families.

And as Michelle and Jill Biden have worked so diligently to tell the rest of the country, not only do our troops serve, but their families serve alongside them.

[*At this point, the First Lady applauded and cheered*.]

See—[*applause*]—that's what she just said.

And yesterday, during Christmas, something that I've been doing during Christmas in——

The First Lady. Today is Christmas.

The President. Or yesterday, during Christmas Eve, thank you, but it was Christmas——

The First Lady. He's on vacation. [*Laughter*]

The President. No, no, no, hold on. There's a reason for that slight error, because my time was off. Yesterday I called—as I do every Christmas—some of our folks that are stationed overseas in Iraq and Afghanistan and some in some very remote spots; some of them who, as we speak, are carrying out missions to defeat ISIL, carrying out missions to protect us from all manner of threat.

And just to remind them that, as tough as it is to be deployed, the people here in America, back home, understand that every single day that you're serving, you're fighting for our freedom and fighting to keep us safe and fighting to maintain our way of life. It's impossible for us to fully repay what you've done and the sacrifices you make. But at least, it's important to hear from us that what you do matters and that we know about it and that we're grateful and that we'll stay grateful even when many of you end up being out of uniform and are veterans and that we make sure that we're serving you as well you served us.

So I just want all of you to know that it has been the privilege of my life to serve as your Commander in Chief. I know Michelle feels the same way when it comes to being able to stand alongside our military families and our veterans. And although this will be my last time addressing you as President, I want you to know that, as a citizen, my gratitude will remain and our commitment to standing by you every step of the way, that won't stop.

So thank you so much for everything that you've done. I hope you guys have had a wonderful Christmas. Young people, I hope Santa was okay. [*Laughter*] And we look forward to seeing you for many years to come, because I understand that I still have a little bit of rank as ex-President. [*Laughter*] So I still get to use the gym on base—[*laughter*]—and, of course, the golf course. [*Laughter*]

So thank you very much, everybody. God bless you. We'll see you taking pictures. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:28 p.m. in the mess hall. In his remarks, he referred to Col. Sean C. Killeen, USMC, commanding officer, and Sgt. Maj. Gregory L. Hall, USMC, sergeant major, Marine Corps Base Hawaii; Brig. Gen. Brian W. Cavanaugh, USMC, deputy commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific; and Jill T. Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Statement on the Observance of Kwanzaa
December 26, 2016

In this holiday season, Michelle and I send our best wishes to those celebrating Kwanzaa. For families across the country, today marks the beginning of a joyous time to reflect on the rich African American culture and to remember the principles of unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith—principles that reflect our most cherished values as Americans.

As we reflect upon this year, we look forward to the blessings and aspirations that await us in the year to come, and we wish those families that will gather together and light the kinara blessings for a happy and healthy new year.

Remarks With Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii
December 27, 2016

Prime Minister Abe. President Obama, Commander Harris, ladies and gentlemen, and all American citizens: I stand here at Pearl Harbor as the Prime Minister of Japan.

If we listen closely, we can make out the sound of restless waves breaking and then retreating again. The calm inlet of brilliant blue is radiant with the gentle sparkle of the warm sun. Behind me, a striking white form atop the azure is the USS Arizona Memorial.

Together with President Obama, I paid a visit to that memorial, the resting place for many souls. It was a place which brought utter silence to me. Inscribed there are the names of the servicemen who lost their lives. Sailors and marines hailing from California and New York, Michigan and Texas, and various other places, serving to uphold their noble duty of protecting the homeland they loved, lost their lives amidst searing flames that day when aerial bombing tore the USS *Arizona* in two.

Even 75 years later, the USS *Arizona*, now at rest atop the seabed, is the final resting place for a tremendous number of sailors and Marines. Listening again, as I focus my senses, alongside the song of the breeze and the rumble of the rolling waves, I can almost discern the voices of those crewmen: voices of lively conversations, upbeat and at ease on that day, on a Sunday morning; voices of young servicemen talking to each other about their futures and dreams; voices calling out the names of loved ones in their very final moments; voices praying for the happiness of children still unborn. Each and every one of those servicemen had a mother and a father anxious about his safety. Many had wives and girlfriends they loved, and many must have had children they would have loved watch grow up. All of that was brought to an end. When I contemplate that solemn reality, I am rendered entirely speechless.

"Rest in peace, precious souls of the fallen." With that overwhelming sentiment, I cast flowers, on behalf of Japanese people, upon the waters where those sailors and marines sleep.

President Obama, the people of the United States of America, and the people around the world: As the Prime Minister of Japan, I offer my sincere and everlasting condolences to the souls of those who lost their lives here, as well as to the spirits of all the brave men and women whose lives were taken by a war that commenced in this very place and also to the souls of the countless innocent people who became the victims of the war.

We must never repeat the horrors of war again. This is the solemn vow we, the people of Japan, have taken. And since the war, we have created a free and democratic country that values the rule of law and has resolutely upheld our vow never again to wage war. We, the people of Japan, will continue to uphold this unwavering principle while harboring quiet pride

in the path we have walked as a peace-loving nation over these 70 years since the war ended.

To the souls of the servicemen who lie in eternal rest aboard the USS *Arizona*, to the American people, and to all peoples around the world, I pledge that unwavering vow here as the Prime Minister of Japan.

Yesterday, at the Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, I visited the memorial marker for an Imperial Japanese Navy officer. He was a fighter pilot by the name of Commander Fusata Iida, who was hit during the attack on Pearl Harbor and gave up on returning to his aircraft carrier. He went back instead and died. It was not Japanese who erected a marker at the site that Iida's fighter plane crashed; it was U.S. servicemen who had been on the receiving end of his attack. Applauding the bravery of the dead pilot, they erected this stone marker.

On the marker, his rank at that time is inscribed—lieutenant, Imperial Japanese Navy—showing the respect to a serviceman who gave his life for his country. "The brave respect the brave." So wrote Ambrose Bierce in a famous poem. Showing respect even to an enemy they fought against, trying to understand even an enemy that they hated, therein lies the spirit of tolerance embraced by the American people.

When the war ended and Japan was a nation in burnt-out ruins as far as the eye could see, suffering under abject poverty, it was the United States and its good people that unstintingly sent us food to eat and clothes to wear. The Japanese people managed to survive and make their way toward the future, thanks to the sweaters and milk sent by the American people. And it was the United States that opened up the path for Japan to return to the international community once more after the war.

Under the leadership of the United States, Japan, as a member of the free world, was able to enjoy peace and prosperity. The good will and assistance you extended to us Japanese—the enemy you had fought so fiercely—together with the tremendous spirit of tolerance, were etched deeply into the hearts and minds of our grandfathers and mothers. We also remember them. Our children and grandchildren will also continue to pass these memories down and never forget what you did for us.

The words pass through my mind, those words inscribed on the wall at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC, where I visited with President Obama: "With malice toward none, with charity for all, let us strive on to do all which may achieve and cherish a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations." These are the words of President Abraham Lincoln.

On behalf of the Japanese people, I hereby wish to express once again my heartfelt gratitude to the United States and to the world for the tolerance extended to Japan.

It has now been 75 years since that Pearl Harbor. Japan and the United States, which fought a fierce war that will go down in the annals of human history, have become allies, with deep and strong ties rarely found anywhere in history. We are allies that will tackle together, to an even greater degree than ever before, the many challenges covering the globe. Ours is an alliance of hope that will lead us to the future.

What has bonded us together is the power of reconciliation made possible through the spirit of tolerance. What I want to appeal to the people of the world here at Pearl Harbor, together with President Obama, is this power of reconciliation. Even today, the horrors of war have not been eradicated from the surface of the world. There is no end to the spiral where hatred creates hatred. The world needs the spirit of tolerance and the power of reconciliation now and especially now.

Japan and the United States, which have eradicated hatred and cultivated friendship and trust on the basis of common values, are now—and especially now—taking responsibility for appealing to the world about the importance of tolerance and the power of reconciliation. That is precisely why the Japan-U.S. alliance is an alliance of hope.

The inlet gazing at us is tranquil as far as the eye can see: Pearl Harbor. It is precisely this beautiful inlet shimmering like pearls that is a symbol of tolerance and reconciliation. It is my wish that our Japanese children and, President Obama, your American children, and indeed,

their children and grandchildren and people all around the world will continue to remember Pearl Harbor as a symbol of reconciliation.

We will spare no efforts to continue our endeavors to make that wish a reality. Together with President Obama, I hereby make my steadfast pledge. Thank you very much.

President Obama. Prime Minister Abe, on behalf of the American people, thank you for your gracious words. Thank you for your presence here today, an historic gesture that speaks to the power of reconciliation and the alliance between the American and Japanese peoples; a reminder that even the deepest wounds of war can give way to friendship and lasting peace.

Distinguished guests, members of our Armed Forces, and most of all, survivors of Pearl Harbor and their loved ones: Aloha.

Audience members. Aloha.

President Obama. To Americans, especially to those of us who call Hawaii home, this harbor is a sacred place. As we lay a wreath or toss flowers into waters that still weep, we think of the more than 2,400 American patriots—fathers and husbands, wives and daughters—manning Heaven's rails for all eternity. We salute the defenders of Oahu who pull themselves a little straighter every December 7, and we reflect on the heroism that shone here 75 years ago.

As dawn broke that December day, paradise never seemed so sweet. The water was warm and impossibly blue. Sailors ate in the mess hall or readied themselves for church, dressed in crisp white shorts and T-shirts. In the harbor, ships at anchor floated in neat rows: the *California*, the *Maryland,* and the *Oklahoma*, the *Tennessee*, the *West Virginia*, and the *Nevada*. On the deck of the *Arizona*, the Navy band was tuning up.

That morning, the ranks on men's shoulders defined them less than the courage in their hearts. Across the island, Americans defended themselves however they could: firing training shells, working old bolt-action rifles. An African American mess steward, who would typically be confined to cleaning duties, carried his commander to safety and then fired an antiaircraft gun until he ran out of ammo.

We honor Americans like Jim Downing, a gunner's mate first class on the *West Virginia*. Before he raced to the harbor, his new bride pressed into his hand a verse of Scripture: "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." As Jim fought to save his ship, he simultaneously gathered the names of the fallen so that he could give closure to their families. He said, "It was just something you do."

We remember Americans like Harry Pang, a fireman from Honolulu, who, in the face of withering fire, worked to douse burning planes until he gave his last full measure of devotion—one of the only civilian firefighters ever to receive the Purple Heart.

We salute Americans like Chief Petty Officer John Finn, who manned a .50-caliber machine gun for more than 2 hours and was wounded more than 20 times, earning him our Nation's highest military decoration, the Medal of Honor.

And it is here that we reflect on how war tests our most enduring values. How, even as Japanese Americans were deprived of their own liberty during the war, one of the most decorated military units in the history of the United States was the 442d Infantry Regiment and its 100th Infantry Battalion: the Japanese American Nisei. In that 442d served my friend and proud Hawaiian, Daniel Inouye, a man who was a Senator from Hawaii for most of my life and with whom I would find myself proud to serve in the Senate Chamber; a man who was not only a recipient of the Medal of Honor and the Presidential Medal of Freedom, but was one of the most distinguished statesmen of his generation as well.

Here at Pearl Harbor, America's first battle of the Second World War roused a nation. Here, in so many ways, America came of age. A generation of Americans, including my grandparents, that Greatest Generation, they did not seek war, but they refused to shrink from it. And they all did their part on fronts and in factories. And while, 75 years later, the proud ranks of Pearl Harbor survivors have thinned with time, the bravery we recall here is forever etched in our national heart. I would ask all our

Pearl Harbor and World War II veterans who are able to, to please stand or raise your hands, because a grateful nation thanks you.

The character of nations is tested in war, but it is defined in peace. After one of the most horrific chapters in human history, one that took not tens of thousands, but tens of millions of lives with ferocious fighting across this ocean, the United States and Japan chose friendship, and they chose peace. Over the decades, our alliance has made both of our nations more successful. It has helped underwrite an international order that has prevented another World War and that has lifted more than a billion people out of extreme poverty. Today, the alliance between the United States and Japan—bound not only by shared interests, but also rooted in common values—stands as the cornerstone of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific and a force for progress around the globe. Our alliance has never been stronger.

In good times and in bad, we are there for each other. Recall 5 years ago, when a wall of water bore down on Japan and reactors in Fukushima melted, America's men and women in uniform were there to help our Japanese friends. Across the globe, the United States and Japan work shoulder-to-shoulder to strengthen the security of the Asia-Pacific and the world: turning back piracy, combating disease, slowing the spread of nuclear weapons, keeping the peace in war-torn lands.

Earlier this year, near Pearl Harbor, Japan joined with two dozen nations in the world's largest maritime military exercise. And that included our Forces from U.S. Pacific Command led by Admiral Harry Harris, the son of an American naval officer and a Japanese mother. Harry was born in Yokosuka, but you wouldn't know it from his Tennessee twang. [*Laughter*] Thank you, Harry, for your outstanding leadership.

In this sense, our presence here today—the connections not just between our governments, but between our people, the presence of Prime Minister Abe here today—remind us of what is possible between nations and between peoples. Wars can end. The most bitter of adversaries can become the strongest of allies. The fruits of peace always outweigh the plunder of war. This is the enduring truth of this hallowed harbor.

It is here that we remember that even when hatred burns hottest, even when the tug of tribalism is at its most primal, we must resist the urge to turn inward. We must resist the urge to demonize those who are different. The sacrifice made here, the anguish of war, reminds us to seek the divine spark that is common to all humanity. It insists that we strive to be what our Japanese friends call *otagai no tame ni*—"with and for each other."

That's the lesson of Captain William Callaghan of the *Missouri*. Even after an attack on his ship, he ordered that the Japanese pilot be laid to rest with military honors, wrapped in a Japanese flag sewn by American sailors. It's the lesson, in turn, of the Japanese pilot who, years later, returned to this harbor, befriended an old marine bugler and asked him to play taps and lay two roses at this memorial every month, one for America's fallen and one for Japan's.

It's a lesson our two peoples learn every day, in the most ordinary of ways, whether it's Americans studying in Tokyo, young Japanese studying across America; scientists from our two nations together unraveling the mysteries of cancer or combating climate change, exploring the stars. It's a baseball player like Ichiro lighting up a stadium in Miami, buoyed by the shared pride of two peoples, both American and Japanese, united in peace and friendship.

As nations and as people, we cannot choose the history that we inherit. But we can choose what lessons to draw from it and use those lessons to chart our own futures.

Prime Minister Abe, I welcome you here in the spirit of friendship, as the people of Japan have always welcomed me. I hope that together, we send a message to the world that there is more to be won in peace than in war; that reconciliation carries more rewards than retribution.

Here in this quiet harbor, we honor those we lost, and we give thanks for all that our two nations have won together as friends.

May God hold the fallen in His everlasting arms. May He watch over our veterans and all who stand guard on our behalf. May God bless us all.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12 p.m. at the Kilo 7/8 pier. In his remarks, he referred to Ichiro Suzuki, right fielder, Major League Baseball's Miami Marlins. Prime Minister Abe spoke in Japanese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Statement on the Designation of Bears Ears National Monument and Gold Butte National Monument
December 28, 2016

Today I am designating two new national monuments in the desert landscapes of Southeastern Utah and Southern Nevada to protect some of our country's most important cultural treasures, including abundant rock art, archeological sites, and lands considered sacred by Native American tribes. Today's actions will help protect this cultural legacy and will ensure that future generations are able to enjoy and appreciate these scenic and historic landscapes. Importantly, today I have also established a Bears Ears Commission to ensure that tribal expertise and traditional knowledge help inform the management of the Bears Ears National Monument and help us to best care for its remarkable national treasures.

Following years of public input and various proposals to protect both of these areas, including legislation and a proposal from tribal governments in and around Utah, these monuments will protect places that a wide range of stakeholders all agree are worthy of protection. We also have worked to ensure that tribes and local communities can continue to access and benefit from these lands for generations to come.

NOTE: The statement referred to Proclamations 8558 and 8559, which are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Taking Additional Steps To Address the National Emergency With Respect to Significant Malicious Cyber-Enabled Activities
December 28, 2016

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the "order") that takes additional steps to address the increasing use of significant malicious cyber-enabled activities to undermine democratic processes or institutions. These steps have been taken with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13694 of April 1, 2015.

The order amends section 1(a) of Executive Order 13694 by providing authority for blocking the property and interests in property of any person determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Attorney General and the Secretary of State, to be responsible for or complicit in, or to have engaged in, directly or indirectly, cyber-enabled activities originating from, or directed by persons located, in whole or in substantial part, outside the United States that are reasonably likely to result in, or have materially contributed to, a significant threat to the national security, foreign policy, or economic health or financial stability of the United States and that have the purpose or effect of tampering with, altering, or causing a misappropriation of information with the purpose or effect of interfering with or undermining election processes or institutions. The order also blocks the property

and interests in property of the persons listed in the Annex to the order.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury the authority, in consultation with the Attorney General and Secretary of State, to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order. All agencies of the United States Government are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of the order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The letter referred to Igor Valentinovich Korobov, Chief, Sergey Aleksandrovich Gizunov, Deputy Chief, and Igor Olegovich Kostyukov and Vladimir Stepanovich Alexseyev, First Deputy Chiefs, Russia's Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU), who were named in the Annex accompanying Executive Order 13757, which is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume. The letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 29.

Statement on United States Actions in Response to Malicious Cyber Activity and Harassment by the Russian Government

December 29, 2016

Today I have ordered a number of actions in response to the Russian Government's aggressive harassment of U.S. officials and cyber operations aimed at the U.S. election. These actions follow repeated private and public warnings that we have issued to the Russian Government and are a necessary and appropriate response to efforts to harm U.S. interests in violation of established international norms of behavior.

All Americans should be alarmed by Russia's actions. In October, my administration publicized our assessment that Russia took actions intended to interfere with the U.S. election process. These data theft and disclosure activities could only have been directed by the highest levels of the Russian Government. Moreover, our diplomats have experienced an unacceptable level of harassment in Moscow by Russian security services and police over the last year. Such activities have consequences. Today I have ordered a number of actions in response.

I have issued an Executive order that provides additional authority for responding to certain cyber activity that seeks to interfere with or undermine our election processes and institutions or those of our allies or partners. Using this new authority, I have sanctioned nine entities and individuals: the GRU and the FSB, two Russian intelligence services; four individual officers of the GRU; and three companies that provided material support to the GRU's cyber operations. In addition, the Secretary of the Treasury is designating two Russian individuals for using cyber-enabled means to cause misappropriation of funds and personal identifying information. The State Department is also shutting down two Russian compounds, in Maryland and New York, used by Russian personnel for intelligence-related purposes, and is declaring "persona non grata" 35 Russian intelligence operatives. Finally, the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Bureau of Investigation are releasing declassified technical information on Russian civilian and military intelligence service cyber activity to help network defenders in the United States and abroad identify, detect, and disrupt Russia's global campaign of malicious cyber activities.

These actions are not the sum total of our response to Russia's aggressive activities. We will continue to take a variety of actions at a

time and place of our choosing, some of which will not be publicized. In addition to holding Russia accountable for what it has done, the United States and friends and allies around the world must work together to oppose Russia's efforts to undermine established international norms of behavior and interfere with democratic governance. To that end, my administration will be providing a report to Congress in the coming days about Russia's efforts to interfere in our election, as well as malicious cyber activity related to our election cycle in previous elections.

NOTE: The statement referred to Igor Valentinovich Korobov, Chief, Sergey Aleksandrovich Gizunov, Deputy Chief, and Igor Olegovich Kostyukov and Vladimir Stepanovich Alexseyev, First Deputy Chiefs, Russia's Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU), who were named in the Annex accompanying Executive Order 13757, which was signed by the President on December 28 and released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 29; and Evgeniy Mikhailovich Bogachev and Aleksey Alekseyevich Belan, Russian citizens who were sanctioned in a parallel action on December 29 by the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control for engaging in malicious cyber-enabled activities pursuant to Executive Order 13694. Executive Order 13757 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President's Weekly Address
December 31, 2016

Happy New Year, everybody. At a time when we turn the page on 1 year and look ahead to the future, I just wanted to take a minute to thank you for everything you've done to make America stronger these past 8 years.

Just 8 years ago, as I prepared to take office, our economy teetered on the brink of depression. Nearly 800,000 Americans were losing their jobs each month. In some communities, nearly one in five folks were out of work. Almost 180,000 troops were serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, and Usama bin Laden was still at large. And on challenges from health care to climate change, we'd been kicking the can down the road for way too long.

Eight years later, you've told a different story. We turned recession into recovery. Our businesses have created 15.6 million new jobs since early 2010, and we've put more people back to work than all other major advanced economies combined. A resurgent auto industry has added nearly 700,000 jobs and is producing more cars than ever. Poverty is falling. Incomes are rising. In fact, last year, folks' typical household income rose by $2,800. That's the single biggest increase on record, and folks at the bottom and middle saw bigger gains than those at the top.

Twenty million more Americans know the financial security of health insurance. Our kids' high school graduation rate is at an alltime high. We've brought 165,000 troops from Iraq and Afghanistan and took out Usama bin Laden. Through diplomacy, we shut down Iran's nuclear weapons program, opened up a new chapter with the people of Cuba, and brought nearly 200 nations together around a climate agreement that could save this planet for our kids. Almost every country on Earth sees America as stronger and more respected today than they did 8 years ago. And marriage equality is finally a reality from coast to coast.

We have made extraordinary progress as a country these past 8 years. And here's the thing: None of it was inevitable. It was the result of tough choices we made and the result of your hard work and resilience. And to keep America moving forward is a task that falls to all of us. Sustaining and building on all we've achieved—from helping more young people afford a higher education, to ending discrimination based on preexisting conditions, to tightening rules on Wall Street, to protecting this planet for our kids—that's going to take all of us

working together. Because that's always been our story: the story of ordinary people coming together in the hard, slow, sometimes frustrating, but always vital, work of self-government.

It has been the privilege of my life to serve as your President. And as I prepare to take on the even more important role of citizen, know that I will be there with you every step of the way to ensure that this country forever strives to live up to the incredible promise of our founding: that all of us are created equal and all of us deserve every chance to live out our dreams.

From the Obama family to yours, have a happy and blessed 2017.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 4:30 p.m. on December 16 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast on December 31. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 30, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on December 31. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Message on the President's Farewell Address to the Nation
January 2, 2017

In 1796, as George Washington set the precedent for a peaceful, democratic transfer of power, he also set a precedent by penning a farewell address to the American people. And over the 220 years since, many American presidents have followed his lead.

On Tuesday, January 10, I'll go home to Chicago to say my grateful farewell to you, even if you can't be there in person.

I'm just beginning to write my remarks. But I'm thinking about them as a chance to say thank you for this amazing journey, to celebrate the ways you've changed this country for the better these past eight years, and to offer some thoughts on where we all go from here.

Since 2009, we've faced our fair share of challenges, and come through them stronger. That's because we have never let go of a belief that has guided us ever since our founding—our conviction that, together, we can change this country for the better.

So I hope you'll join me one last time.

Because, for me, it's always been about you.

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary as an e-mail message from the President distributed to the White House e-mail list and posted on the White House blog.

Remarks During a Meeting With Department of Defense Leadership
January 4, 2017

Well, happy New Year, everybody. Let me begin by thanking Ash Carter, our Secretary of Defense; General Joe Dunford, Vice Chair Paul Selva, and all of our commanders here.

The purpose of this meeting, something I do on a regular basis, is to allow me to hear directly from those who are charged with the most solemn responsibility of maintaining the finest fighting force that the world has ever known and keeping the American people safe. It is in these meetings that we have been able to set broad strategy, identify areas where we have to improve, address the health of the force. And I can say to the American people that they are extraordinarily lucky and I am extraordinarily lucky to be served by such extraordinary patriots.

This will be my last meeting with them. And so part of my goal here is just to say thank you to them and let them know how much I appreciate the counsel, the advice, the leadership that they have consistently shown throughout my time in office.

But in addition to saying thank you, I will get their views on the fact that we still have a lot of active threats around the world and we still have men and women in harm's way around the world who are busy protecting our homeland and our vital interests and our allies. And we've got to make sure that during this transition period that there is a seamless passing of the baton, that there's continuity, and that any issues that still remain—and obviously, we still have major fights against ISIS in Mosul and in Syria; Afghanistan is still active—that in all of these areas we are doing everything we can to make sure that the next President will benefit from the same kinds of outstanding advice and service that these people around the table have provided me.

So it has been, as I've said repeatedly, one of the greatest honors and privileges of being President is serving as Commander in Chief to such outstanding people. And I couldn't have done it without all of you. And I know that my optimism about America going forward is in part because we have such an amazing military, not only one that knows how to fight, but also knows how to uphold the values of rule of law and professionalism and integrity and recognizes our constitutional structure and maintains strict adherence and respect for civilian authority and democratic practices in determining how we use the awesome force of the American military.

So I just want to say thank you to all of you. And with that, we've got to do some work. All right?

Thank you so much. I appreciate it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:31 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President-elect Donald J. Trump. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization, also known as ISIS.

Remarks at an Armed Forces Full Honor Review Farewell Ceremony at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Virginia
January 4, 2017

Thank you so much. Thank you. Thank you. Please be seated.

Well, good afternoon. It turns out, these are easier when you're talking about somebody else. [*Laughter*] At moments like this, I think of all the times that I've stood before our men and women in uniform, commissioning our newest officers, presiding over promotions, presenting the Commander in Chief's Trophy to the best football team in the military. I will let you argue over that one. [*Laughter*] I have never taken sides.

Secretary Carter, I could not be more grateful for your gracious words, but more importantly, for your outstanding leadership across, as you noted, more than three decades and nearly all of my Presidency. You have always given me, Ash, your best strategic counsel. You've made sure that we were investing in innovation for the long term and a strong force for the future. As a physicist, Ash is also one of the few people who actually understands how our defense systems work. And I know that our troops and their families are immensely grateful for the compassion that you and Stephanie have shown them over the years. So to you and your family, on behalf of all of us, thank you for your outstanding service.

General Dunford, we've relied on you as Commandant of the Marine Corps, as our commander in Afghanistan, and now, as our Nation's highest ranking military officer. I thank you and General Selva and the entire Joint Chiefs for the unvarnished military advice that you've always provided to me, for your dedication, for your professionalism, for you integrity. Because of you, because of this team, our Armed Forces are more integrated and better prepared across domains: a truly Joint Force. Which is why, as a White Sox fan, I can overlook the fact that you love the Red Sox. [*Laughter*] Moreover, on a personal note,

outside of your professional qualities, you are a good man, and I am grateful to have worked with you and thank Ellyn for allowing you to do this.

To Members of Congress; Vice President Biden, who, along with Jill, has known the love and the pride and the sacrifice of a military family; to Deputy Secretary Work; Service Secretaries; distinguished guests; dedicated civilians from across the Defense Department; my national security team; most of all, our men and women in uniform: I thank you for this honor, and for the warmth and respect that you've always shown me, the support that you've shown Michelle and our daughters during these past 8 years.

And so, although I recognize that the formalities require me listening to praise directed in large part to me, I want to turn the tables—I am still Commander in Chief—[*laughter*]—and so I get to do what I want to do—and I want to thank you. Of all the privileges of this office—and there are many—I will miss Air Force One, I will miss Marine One—[*laughter*]—but I can stand before you today and say that there has been no greater privilege and no greater honor than serving as the Commander in Chief of the greatest military in the history of the world.

When I took office, I noted that Presidents and those of you in uniform swear a similar oath: to protect and defend this country and the Constitution that we cherish. And by stepping forward and volunteering, by raising your right hand and taking that oath, each of you made a solemn pledge. You committed yourself to a life of service and of sacrifice. And I, in turn, made a promise to you, which, to the best of my abilities, I've tried to uphold every single day since: that I would only send you into harm's way when it is absolutely necessary, with a strategy and well-defined goals, with the equipment and the support that you needed to get the job done. Because that's what you rightfully expect, and that is what you rightfully deserve.

I made that pledge at a time when less than 1 percent of Americans wear the uniform. Fewer Americans know someone who serves. And as a result, a lot of Americans don't see the sacrifices you make on our behalf. But as Commander in Chief, I do. I've seen it when I look into the eyes of young cadets, knowing that my decisions could very well send them into harm's way. I've seen it when I visited the field in Bagram and Baghdad, far from your families, risking your lives so that we can live ours safely and in freedom. And so you have inspired me, and I have been humbled by you consistently. And I want every American to know what I know: Through year after year after year of continuous military operations, you have earned your place among the greatest generations.

The list of accomplishments that Joe and Ash so generously mentioned, they're because of you. It's what I tell my staff. I'm the front man, but you're the ones doing the work. Because of you, our alliances are stronger, from Europe to the Asia-Pacific. Because of you, we surged in Afghanistan, trained Afghan forces to defend their country, while bringing most of our troops home. Today, our Forces serve there on a more limited mission, because we must never again allow Afghanistan to be used for a safe haven in attacks against our Nation.

It's because of you—particularly our remarkable special forces—that the core Al Qaida leadership that attacked us on 9/11 has been decimated. Countless terrorist leaders, including Usama bin Laden, are gone. From South Asia to Africa, we have forged partnerships to go after terrorists that threaten us. Because of you, we are leading the global coalition against ISIL. These terrorists have lost about half of their territory. They are losing their leaders. Towns and cities are being liberated. And I have no doubt this barbaric terrorist group will be destroyed because of you.

You've shown that when it comes to fighting terrorism, we can be strong and we can be smart. Not by letting our Forces get dragged into sectarian conflicts and civil wars, but with smart, sustainable, principled partnerships. That's how we've brought most of our troops home, from nearly 180,000 troops in Iraq and Afghanistan down to 15,000 today. That's how, even as we've suffered terrible attacks here at

home, from Boston to Orlando, no foreign terrorist organization has successfully planned and executed an attack on our homeland these past 8 years.

Because of you, the world has seen the awesome reach of American Armed Forces. In some of the first few weeks of my job, when Somali pirates took Captain Phillips, later on, when they kidnapped Jessica Buchanan, it was you that went in and you that risked everything and you that brought these Americans home to their families.

The world has seen your compassion: the help you deliver in times of crisis, from an earthquake in Haiti to the tsunami in Japan. Think of Ebola and the countless lives this Armed Forces saved in West Africa. It was you that set up the architecture and set the example for the world's response. One woman in West Africa said, "We thanked God first, and then we thanked America second, for caring about us." That's the difference you make—you continue to make in the lives of people around the world.

As you know well, with service comes great sacrifice. And after 15 years of war, our wounded warriors bear the scars: both seen and unseen. In my visits to their bedsides and rehab centers, I have been in awe, watching a wounded warrior grab his walker and pull himself up and through excruciating pain, take a step, and then another. Or hearing troops describe how they grappled with posttraumatic stress, but summoned the strength to ask for help. As a military and as a nation, we have to keep supporting our resilient and incredibly strong wounded warriors as they learn to walk and run and heal. As they find new ways to keep serving our Nation, they need to know that we still need your incredible talents. You've given so much to America, and I know you have more to give.

And then you have not seen the depths of true love and true patriotism until you've been to Dover when our troops receive our fallen heroes on their final journey home; until you have grieved with our Gold Star families who've given a piece of their heart to our Nation—a son or a daughter, a father or mother, a husband or wife, a brother or a sister—every one a patriot. Every single one of these American families deserves the everlasting gratitude and support of our entire Nation.

Today, after two major ground wars, our Armed Forces have drawn down, and that is natural, and it is necessary. And after reckless budget cuts of sequester, we need to keep improving the readiness and the training and modernizing our Forces. So let me take this opportunity, while I still have it, to appeal to our friends from Congress who are here: We cannot go back to sequestration. There is a responsible way forward: investing in America's strengths, our national security and our economic security; investing in the reform and the equipment and support that our troops need, including the pay and the benefits and the quality of life and the education and the jobs that our troops and our veterans and all of your families deserve.

But make no mistake: Even with the challenges of recent years—and there have been challenges—our allies and adversaries alike understand America's military remains, by far, the most capable fighting force on the face of the Earth. Our Army, tested by years of combat, is the best trained and best equipped land force on the planet. Our Navy is the largest and most lethal in the world, on track to surpass 300 ships. Our Air Force, with its precision and reach, is unmatched. Our Marine Corps is the world's only truly expeditionary force. Our Coast Guard is the finest in the world.

And we're also the best because this military has come to welcome the talents of more of our fellow Americans. Servicemembers can now serve the country they love without hiding who they are or who they love. All combat positions in our military are now open to women. And Joe Biden and I know that women are at least as strong as men. We're stronger for it. It's one of the reasons that our military stands apart as the most respected institution in our Nation by a mile. The American people look up to you and your devotion to duty and your integrity and your sense of honor and your commitment to each other.

One of my proudest achievements is that I have been able to, I think, communicate through the constant partisan haze, along with so many others, how special this institution is, and the esteem in which our military is held has held steady and constant and high throughout my Presidency. And I'm very grateful for that. Because you remind us that we are united as one team. At times of division, you've shown what it means to pull together.

So my days as your Commander in Chief are coming to an end, and as I reflect on the challenges we have faced together and on those to come, I believe that one of the greatest tasks before our Armed Forces is to retain the high confidence that the American people rightly place in you. This is a responsibility not simply for those of you in uniform, but for those who lead you. It's the responsibility of our entire Nation.

And so we are called to remember core principles: That we must never hesitate to act when necessary to defend our Nation, but we must also never rush into war because sending you into harm's way should be a last and not first resort. It should be compelled by the needs of our security and not our politics. We need to remember that we must not give in to the false illusion of isolationism, because in this dangerous time, oceans alone will not protect us, and the world still seeks and needs our leadership as the one indispensable nation.

We have to remember that our military has to be prepared for the full spectrum of threats, conventional and unconventional, from 20th-century-style aggression to 21st-century-style cyber threats. And when we do go to war, we have to hold ourselves to high standards and do everything in our power to prevent the loss of innocent life, because that's what we stand for. That's what we should stand for. We have to remember that as we meet the threats of our times, we cannot sacrifice our values or our way of life: the rule of law and openness and tolerance that defines us as Americans. That is our greatest strength and makes us a beacon to the world. We cannot sacrifice the very freedoms that we're fighting for.

And finally, in our democracy, the continued strength of our All-Volunteer Force also rests on something else: a strong bond of respect and trust between those in uniform and the citizens that you protect and defend. At a time when too few Americans truly understand the realities or sacrifices of military service, at a time when many political leaders have not served, if some in the military begin to feel as though somehow they are apart from the larger society they serve, those bonds can fray.

As every generation learns anew, freedom is not free. And so while less than 1 percent of Americans may be fighting our wars, 100 percent of Americans can do their parts, at the very least, to support you and your families. Everybody can do something—every business, every profession, every school, every community, every State—to reach out and to give back and to let you know that we care, to help make the lives of our troops and your families just a little bit easier. Everybody can do something.

And that's why Michelle and Jill Biden have mobilized more Americans to honor and support you and your families through Joining Forces. And that's why, even after we leave the White House, Michelle and I intend to keep on looking for ways to help rally more of our fellow citizens to be there for you, just like you've always been there for us.

So we can't say it enough and we can't show it enough. Thank you for your patriotism. Thank you for your professionalism. Thank you for your character in representing the very best of the American spirit. Our Nation endures, we live free under the Red, White, and Blue, because of patriots like you.

It has been a privilege of a lifetime to serve with you. I have learned much from you. I'm a better man having worked with you. I'm confident that the United States and our Armed Forces will remain the greatest force for freedom and security that the world has ever known.

God bless you and your families, and God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:21 p.m. in Conmy Hall. In his remarks, he referred to

Stephanie Carter, wife of Secretary of Defense Ashton B. Carter; Ellyn Dunford, wife of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Joseph F. Dunford, Jr., USMC; Jill T. Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden; Richard Phillips, captain, *MV Maersk Alabama*, who was rescued from pirates off the coast of Somalia on April 12, 2009; and Jessica Buchanan, a U.S. citizen kidnapped by pirates in Galcayo, Somalia, in 2011 and rescued by U.S. special operations forces on January 24, 2012. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Letter to the Nation on Cabinet Member Exit Memorandums
January 4, 2017

To my fellow Americans,

Eight years ago, America faced a moment of peril unlike any we'd seen in decades.

A spiraling financial crisis threatened to plunge an economy in recession into a deep depression. The very heartbeat of American manufacturing—the American auto industry—was on the brink of collapse. In some communities, nearly one in five Americans were out of work. Nearly 180,000 American troops were serving in harm's way in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the mastermind of the worst terror attack on American soil remained at large. And on challenges from health care to climate change, we'd been kicking the can down the road for way too long.

But in the depths of that winter, on January 20, 2009, I stood before you and swore a sacred oath. I told you that day that the challenges we faced would not be met easily or in a short span of time—but they would be met. And after eight busy years, we've met them—because of you.

Eight years later, an economy that was shrinking at more than eight percent is now growing at more than three percent. Businesses that were bleeding jobs unleashed the longest streak of job creation on record. The auto industry has roared its way back, saving one million jobs across the country and fueling a manufacturing sector that, after a decade of decline, has added new jobs for the first time since the 1990s. And wages have grown faster over the past few years than at any time in the past forty.

Today, thanks to the Affordable Care Act, another 20 million American adults know the financial security and peace of mind that comes with health insurance. Another three million children have gained health insurance. For the first time ever, more than ninety percent of Americans are insured—the highest rate ever. We've seen the slowest growth in the price of health care in fifty years, along with improvements in patient safety that have prevented an estimated 87,000 deaths. Every American with insurance is covered by the strongest set of consumer protections in history—a true Patients' Bill of Rights—and free from the fear that illness or accident will derail your dreams, because America is now a place where discrimination against preexisting conditions is a relic of the past. And the new health insurance marketplace means that if you lose your job, change your job, or start that new business, you'll finally be able to purchase quality, affordable care and the security and peace of mind that comes with it—and that's one reason why entrepreneurship is growing for the second straight year.

Our dependence on foreign oil has been cut by more than half, and our production of renewable energy has more than doubled. In many places across the country, clean energy from the wind is now cheaper than dirtier sources of energy, and solar now employs more Americans than coal mining in jobs that pay better than average and can't be outsourced. We also enacted the most sweeping reforms since the Great Depression to protect consumers and prevent a crisis on Wall Street from punishing Main Street ever again. These actions didn't stifle growth, as critics predicted. Instead, the stock market has nearly tripled. Since I signed Obamacare into law, America's

businesses have added more than 15 million new jobs. And the economy is undoubtedly more durable than it was in the days when we relied on oil from unstable nations and banks took risky bets with your money.

The high school graduation rate is now 83 percent—the highest on record—and we've helped more young people graduate from college than ever before. At the same time, we've worked to offer more options for Americans who decide not to pursue college, from expanding apprenticeships, to launching high-tech manufacturing institutes, to revamping the job training system and creating programs like TechHire to help people train for higher-paying jobs in months, not years. We've connected more schools across the country to broadband internet, and supported more teachers to bring coding, hands-on making, and computational thinking into our classrooms to prepare all our children for a 21st century economy.

Add it all up, and last year, the poverty rate fell at the fastest rate in almost fifty years while the median household income grew at the fastest rate on record. And we've done it all while cutting our deficits by nearly two-thirds even as we protected investments that grow the middle class.

Meanwhile, over the past eight years, no foreign terrorist organization has successfully planned and executed an attack on our homeland. Plots have been disrupted. Terrorists like Osama bin Laden have been taken off the battlefield. We've drawn down from nearly 180,000 troops in harm's way in Iraq and Afghanistan to just 15,000. With a coalition of more than 70 nations and a relentless campaign of more than 16,000 airstrikes so far, we are breaking the back of ISIL and taking away its safe havens, and we've accomplished this at a cost of $10 billion over two years—the same amount that we spent in one month at the height of the Iraq War.

At the same time, America has led the world to meet a set of global challenges. Through diplomacy, we shut down Iran's nuclear weapons program, opened up a new chapter with the people of Cuba, and brought nearly 200 nations together around a climate agreement that could save this planet for our kids. With new models for development, American assistance is helping people around the world feed themselves, care for their sick, and power communities across Africa. And almost every country on Earth sees America as stronger and more respected today than they did eight years ago. All of this progress is due to the service of millions of Americans in intelligence, law enforcement, homeland security, diplomacy, and the brave men and women of our Armed Forces—the most diverse institution in America.

We've also worked to make the changing face of America more fair and more just—including by making strides towards criminal justice reform, making progress towards equal pay, repealing Don't Ask, Don't Tell, and advancing the cause of civil rights, women's rights, and LGBT rights. I appointed two extraordinary women to the Supreme Court, marking the first time in history that three women sit on the bench, including the first Latina. And today in America, marriage equality is finally a reality across all fifty states.

This is where America stands after eight years of progress. By so many measures, our country is stronger and more prosperous than it was when we started—a situation I'm proud to leave for my successor. And it's thanks to you—to the hard work you've put in; the sacrifices you've made for your families and communities; the way you've looked out for one another.

Still, through every victory and every setback, I've insisted that change is never easy, and never quick; that we wouldn't meet all of our challenges in one term, or one presidency, or even in one lifetime. And for all that we've achieved, there's still so much I wish we'd been able to do, from enacting gun safety measures to protect more of our kids and our cops from mass shootings like Newtown, to passing commonsense immigration reform that encourages the best and brightest from around the world to study, stay, and create jobs in America.

And for all the incredible progress our economy has made in just eight years, we still have

more work to do for every American still in need of a good job or a raise, paid leave or a dignified retirement. We have to acknowledge the inequality that has come from an increasingly globalized economy while committing ourselves to making it work better for everyone, not just those at the top, and give everyone who works hard a fair shot at success.

And here's the thing—over the past eight years, we've shown that we can. Last year, income gains were actually larger for households at the bottom and the middle than for those at the top. We've also made the tax code fairer. The tax changes enacted over the past eight years have ensured that the top one percent of Americans pay more of their fair share, increasing the share of income received by all other families by more than the tax changes in any previous administration since at least 1960. Simply put, we've actually begun the long task of reversing inequality. But as the global economy changes, we'll have to do more to accelerate these trends, from strengthening unions that speak for workers, to preventing colleges from pricing out hardworking students, to making sure that minimum wage workers get a raise and women finally get paid the same as men for doing the same job. What won't help is taking health care away from 30 million Americans, most of them white and working class; denying overtime pay to workers, most of whom have more than earned it; or privatizing Medicare and Social Security and letting Wall Street regulate itself again—none of which middle-class Americans voted for.

We will have to move forward as we always have—together. As a people who believe that out of many, we are one; that we are bound not by any one race or religion, but rather an adherence to a common creed; that all of us are created equal in the eyes of God. And I'm confident we will. Because the change we've brought about these past eight years was never about me. It was about you. It is you, the American people, who have made the progress of the last eight years possible. It is you who will make our future progress possible. That, after all, is the story of America—a story of progress. However halting, however incomplete, however harshly challenged at each point on our journey—the story of America is a story of progress.

Recently, I asked each member of my talented and dedicated Cabinet to prepare a detailed report on the progress we've made across the board these past eight years, and the work that remains to make this country we love even stronger. Today, I'm sharing them with you. And I hope you'll share them with others, and do your part to build on the progress we've made across the board.

It has been the privilege of my life to serve as your President. And as I prepare to pass the baton and do my part as a private citizen, I'm proud to say that we have laid a new foundation for America. A new future is ours to write. And I'm as confident as ever that it will be led by the United States of America—and that our best days are still ahead.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: The letter referred to Supreme Court Associate Justices Sonia M. Sotomayor, Elena Kagan, and Ruth Bader Ginsburg; and President-elect Donald J. Trump. It also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 5, along with online versions of the exit memorandums submitted to the President by each Cabinet member.

Interview on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act With Ezra Klein and Sarah Kliff of Vox

January 6, 2017

Vox Editor-in-Chief Ezra Klein. Good morning, and welcome to the Blair House. I'm Ezra Klein, founder and editor-in-chief of Vox, here alongside my colleague Sarah Kliff. We are honored to be here today to speak with President Obama about the Affordable Care Act: its performance, its passage, and its now uncertain future. I think we'd all prefer to hear from him than from me so I won't waste any more of your time with introduction. Please join me in welcoming President Barack Obama.

The President. Hello, hello, hello. Thank you.

Vox Senior Editor Sarah Kliff. All right.

The President. Good morning.

Ms. Kliff. Good morning. Yes.

Mr. Klein. Good morning. Thank you for being here.

The President. It is great to be here. And thank you so much for all the good reporting you guys have been doing on this important issue.

Mr. Klein. Well, thank you.

Ms. Kliff. All right. So we will get started. So there was an expectation that was shared among many of your staff, many congressional Democrats, that as the Affordable Care Act rolled out, as it delivered benefits to millions of people, that it would become more popular. It would be safe from repeal or even substantial reform. And it appears, at this point, that doesn't seem to be quite true. What do you think that theory got wrong? Why didn't the health care law become more popular?

The President. Well, let's back up and say from the start, there's a reason why for a hundred years no President could get expansion of health care coverage beyond the work that had been done for Medicare and Medicaid, targeting primarily seniors. And the reason was that this is hard. The health care system is big; it is very personal. Families, I think, recognize the need for health insurance, but it's not something that they think about except when things go wrong, when you have an accident or you're sick. And so any costs, particularly at a time when families are feeling stressed economically, any added costs, higher premiums, higher copays, all that ends up having real impacts on families.

And so the challenge of getting it passed was always the fact that, unlike other advanced countries, we didn't start with a system in which everybody was covered, and we have a very complicated marketplace, and we have third-party insurers. And what that meant was that even after we got the law passed anything that dissatisfied people about the health care system could be attributed to—quote, unquote—"Obamacare," even if it had nothing to do with Obamacare. And that was something that we recognized even when we were trying to get the law passed.

But the other thing is the fact that the unwillingness of Republicans in Congress and around the country, including some Governors, to, after the fight was over, say, all right, let's try to make this work—the way Democrats did during the time when President Bush tried to expand the prescription drug program, Part D—meant that the public never heard from those who had originally been opposed any concession that, you know what, this is actually doing some good. And that ends up affecting public opinion.

And the third thing is that whenever you look at polls that say 40-something percent are supportive of the law and 40-something percent are dissatisfied, in the dissatisfied column are a whole bunch of Bernie Sanders supporters who wanted a single-payer plan. [*Laughter*] And so the problem is not that they think Obamacare is a failure; the problem is that they don't think it went far enough and that it left too many people still uncovered, that the subsidies that people were getting weren't as rich as they should have been, that there's a way of dealing with prescription drug makers in a way that drives down those costs. And so

all those things meant that even after the law was passed, there was going to still be a lot tough politics.

Having said all that, the thing that I've been most proud of is the fact that not only have we gotten 20 million people covered, not only have we been able to reduce the pace at which health care costs have been going up—ever since the law was passed, basically health care inflation has been as low as it's been in 50 years, which has saved the Federal Government hundreds of billions of dollars, extended the Medicare trust fund by 11 years—but most importantly, for the people who have gotten insurance through the exchanges, there's been pretty high satisfaction rates, as surveys have shown.

So, rather than look at public opinion as a whole, the thing I've been most interested in is, how is this affecting the people who have gotten benefits? These are real families who have gotten real coverage. And I get letters every single day from people who say, this has saved my life, or this has saved my bank account, or this has made sure that my son who got hooked on some sort of opioid was able to get treatment, or I was able to get a mammogram that caught a cancer in time. And that ultimately is the measure of the success of the law.

Mr. Klein. So do you think this dynamic where, when you reform the health care system, you own it, goes the other way? Republicans are beginning with the repeal-and-delay strategy. President-elect Trump has said that he does want to repeal Obamacare, but he also wants to replace it with something that covers as many people, or he said that at least at certain points.

Do you think that the dynamic in which you became responsible for what people didn't like is going to hamper Republican movement in their efforts to change a system that maybe they don't like, but does have a lot of people relying on it?

The President. Well, let me start from a very simple premise: If it works, I'm for it. If something can cover all Americans, make sure that if they have a preexisting condition they can still get coverage, make sure that prescription drugs are affordable, encourage preventive measures to keep people healthy, that makes sure that in rural communities people have access to substance abuse care or mental health care, that Medicare and Medicaid continue to function effectively—if you can do all that cheaper than we talked about, cheaper than Obamacare achieves and with better quality and it's just terrific, I'm for it. [*Laughter*]

I think that part of the challenge in this whole debate—and this is true, dating back to 2009, back to 2010—is this idea that somehow we had a fixed way of trying to fix the health care system, that we were rigid and stubborn and wouldn't welcome Republican ideas, and if we only had, they had all these great solutions. In fact, if you look at how this law evolved—and I've said this publicly before—if I was starting from scratch, I probably would have supported a single-payer system because it's just easier to—for people to understand and manage. And that's essentially what Medicare is, is a single-payer system for people of a certain age. And people are very satisfied with it, and it's not that complicated to understand or to access services. But that's—that wasn't available; we weren't starting from scratch.

So what did I then do? I said, well, where is a system out there that seems to be providing coverage for everybody that politically we could actually get through a Congress and where we could get Republican support? And lo and behold, in Massachusetts there was a plan that had been designed on a bipartisan basis—including by a Republican Governor who ultimately became the nominee for the Republican Party—that came close to providing universal coverage. And I would have thought, since this was an idea that had previously gotten a lot of Republican support, that it would continue to get a lot of Republican support. And yet, somehow, magically, the minute we said this is a great idea and it's working, Republicans said this is terrible and we don't want to do this. [*Laughter*]

So I say all this, Ezra, simply to make something very clear. From the very start, in the earliest negotiations in 2009 and 2010, I made

clear to Republicans that, if they had ideas that they could show would work better than the ideas that we had thought of, I would be happy to incorporate them into the law. And rather than offer ideas, what we got was a big no, we just don't want to do this.

After the law passed, for the last 6, 7 years, there has been the argument that we can provide a great replacement that will be much better for everybody than what the Affordable Care Act is providing. And yet, over the last 6, 7 years, there has been no actual replacement law that any credible health care policy experts have said would work better. In fact, many of them would result in millions of people losing coverage and the coverage being worse for those who kept it.

And so now is the time when Republicans, I think, have to go ahead and show their cards. If in fact they have a program that would genuinely work better and they want to call it whatever they want—they can call it Trumpcare, they can call it McConnellcare or Ryancare—[*laughter*]—if it actually works, I will be the first one to say, great, you should have told me that back in 2009. I asked. [*Laughter*] I suspect that will not happen.

And the reason it will not happen is because if you want to provide coverage to people, then there are certain baseline things that you've got to do. Number one, health care is not cheap. And for people who can't afford health care or don't get it through the job, that means the Government has got to pay some money.

Number two, all those provisions that the Republicans say they want to keep and that they like—for example, making sure that people can get health insurance even if they have a preexisting condition—well, it turns out that the only way to meet that guarantee is to either make sure that everybody has some modest obligation to get health care so that they're not gaming the system, or you've got to be willing to provide huge subsidies to the insurance companies so that they're taking in people who are already sick.

And I think what you're going to see now—now that you have a Republican President-elect, you have Republicans who control both Chambers in Congress—is that all the promises they made about how they can do it better, cheaper, everybody is going to be satisfied, are going to be really hard to meet.

And this is why the strategy of repeal first and replace later is just a huge disservice to the American people and is something that I think, whether you're a Republican or a Democrat, you should be opposed to. These are real lives at stake.

I'm getting letters right now from people who say, I am terrified because my son's or daughter's insurance, their ability to get lifesaving drugs, their ability to get drug treatment, their ability to get mental health services are entirely dependent on us being able to afford and keep our insurance.

And if in fact there's going to be a massive undoing of what's one-sixth of our economy, then the Republicans need to put forward very specific ideas about how they're going to do it. People need to be able to debate it, they need to be able to study it the same way they did when we passed the Affordable Care Act. And let the American people gauge, is this going to result in something better than what Obamacare has produced?

And if they're so convinced that they can do it better, they shouldn't be afraid to make that presentation. It is really interesting to try to figure out, why is it that they're trying to rush the repeal so quick? I mean, what is it that they're afraid of? Why wouldn't they want to say, here's our plan, and show, side by side, here's why our plan is better than what Obamacare has produced? Because they have said, absolutely, adamantly, that they can do it better.

I am saying to every Republican right now, if you, in fact, can put a plan together that is demonstrably better than what Obamacare is doing, I will publicly support repealing Obamacare and replacing it with your plan. But I want to see it first. [*Laughter*] I want to see it first. And I want third-party, objective people—whether it's the Congressional Budget Office or health care experts across the ideological spectrum, or Vox, or whoever——

Mr. Klein. We'd be happy to, yes. [*Laughter*] Thank you.

The President. ——to just evaluate it. And the public will not have to take my word for it. They can—we can designate some referees. And if they can show that they can do it better, cheaper, more effective, provide better coverage, why wouldn't I be for it? Why wouldn't I be for it?

This idea that somehow, oh, this is about Obama preserving his legacy or—keep in mind, I'm not the one who named it Obamacare. [*Laughter*] They were the ones who named it Obamacare, because what they wanted to do was personalize this and feed on antipathy towards me in their party as an organizing tool, as politics.

But I don't have a pride of authorship on this thing. If they can come up with something better, I'm for it. But you have to show—and I would advise every Democrat to be for it—but you have to show that it's better. And that's not too much to ask. And that's the challenge.

And the question right now for Paul Ryan and Mitch McConnell is, why is it that you feel obliged to repeal it before you show what it is that is going to replace?

Because the majority of Americans have been very clear that they think that's a bad idea. You now have Republican Governors, some Republican Senators, who have said, we don't think that's a good idea. And there's been no real explanation to why you would actually try to do this before the new President is even inaugurated. [*Laughter*] What exactly is this rush? Particularly if you're going to delay the actual repeal.

If they were making the argument that this is so disastrous that we actually think we have to repeal it completely today because it's just terrible, well, I would disagree, but at least I could understand it. But here you're saying, I'm—we're going to vote to repeal, but then were going to delay its effects for a couple of years. Well, why, if it's so bad?

And if it's—if the answer is, well, it would be disruptive and we don't want to take people's insurance away right away, well, then that means you have time to show us and, more importantly, show the American people who need health insurance what exactly you're replacing it with.

In that sense—Ezra, I know that was a long answer to—[*laughter*]—but in that sense, the answer is the Republicans, yes, will own the problems with the health care system if they choose to repeal something that is providing health insurance to a lot of people and providing benefits to every American who has health insurance even if they're getting it through the job, and they haven't shown us what it is that they're going to do. Then they do own it, because that is irresponsible. And even members of their own party, even those who are opposed to me, have said that that is an irresponsible thing to do.

Ms. Kliff. Let me follow up a little bit on the congressional fight. So we saw yesterday President-elect Donald Trump, he said on Twitter, "It was time for Republicans and Democrats to get together and come up with a health care plan that really works"—which is something—I remember you saying similar things in 2009, 2010, when I was covering this debate. Knowing what you know now about partisanship, being a President who has tried to do this, was, like you said, unable to get Republican votes, what three pieces of advice would you give someone trying to attempt to pass a bipartisan health care law?

The President. Well, look, I think I sort of gave the advice just now, which is, if in fact this is not about politics but this is about providing the best possible health care system for the American people, then my advice would be to say what precisely is it about Obamacare that you think doesn't work. Because you've already said that there are some things you think do work. Right?

The Republicans keep on saying, well, we want to keep the things that people like and that are working well. So they think that it's a good idea that Obamacare says your kids can stay on your health insurance plan until they're 26. They think that's a good idea. They think it's a good idea that if you've got a preexisting condition you can still get health insurance. I assume they think it's a good idea that seniors have gotten discounts on their prescription

drugs; we closed the "doughnut hole" during the course of Obamacare. They approve of some of the changes we've made to encourage a health care system that rewards quality rather than just the number of procedures involved, right, the—and how we pay providers.

So we could make a list of all the things that, as terrible as Obamacare is, actually they think works, according to them. All right, well, let's make, then, a list of the things they don't like or the American people are concerned about.

Well, what we know is that people would always like lower costs on their premiums and their out-of-pocket expenses. And although the Affordable Care Act provides a lot of subsidies to a lot of people so they can afford health insurance, what is absolutely true is, we would love to see even higher subsidies to relieve the costs even more. But that costs money.

What we also know is that where we've seen problems in the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, it has been in certain areas, particularly more rural areas, less densely populated areas, where we're not seeing as many insurers, so there's not as much competition. Well, one way that we've suggested you could solve that problem is to say that if in fact there aren't enough insurers to drive competition and reduce costs and give people enough choices, then we should have a public option that's available.

So, if you look at the things that people are frustrated about with Obamacare, the Affordable Care Act, the big things are the subsidies aren't as high as they'd like and they don't have as many options as they'd like. And I'm happy to provide those—both those things. I'd sign on to a Republican plan that said we're going to give more subsidies to people to make it even cheaper, and we're going to have a public option where there isn't an option.

Here's the problem. I don't think that's the thing that they want—[*laughter*]—to do.

Ms. Kliff. I don't think so, no.

The President. But I guess my point is this, that it is possible for people of good will to try to come up with significant improvements to the law that we already have, but it does require to be specific about what it is that you think needs to be changed. And that, so far, has not happened.

And my advice to the President-elect, —in fact, we talked about this when I met with him for an hour and a half right after he got elected—I said make your team and make the Republican Members of Congress come up with things that they can show will actually make this work better for people. And if they're convincing, I think you would find that there are a lot of Democrats out there—including me—that would be prepared to support it. But so far, at least, that's not what's happened.

Mr. Klein. So I think Obamacare has exposed an interesting tension between controlling costs in the system and controlling economic pain for individuals.

The President. Right.

Mr. Klein. So the law has, until now, come in under budget. But in part, the ways it's done that are higher deductibles than people expected, higher copays, narrower networks. In a couple of years, if it doesn't change, the excise tax on high-value insurance will come into play, the individual mandate. And these things, to individual people, while they keep the usage of health care down and they keep the cost of health care down, they make health care feel more expensive. They make health care feel unusable.

Do you think the Affordable Care Act got the balance right on controlling systemwide costs versus insulating individuals from their health expenses?

The President. Well, let me make a couple distinctions. First of all, part of what happened at the beginning of the marketplaces—and for those who aren't wonks—[*laughter*]—I was teasing Ezra and Sarah, I said this is like a Wonkapalooza. [*Laughter*] These—this is some serious policy detail here.

But so the marketplaces are basically just those places where insurers put up, here's the insurance package we're offering, and you can choose from a variety of different packages, and then once you've chosen, you can figure out the subsidies that you're qualified for, and it will give you a sense of what your out-of-pocket costs are.

And what we've discovered was that a lot of insurers underpriced early on, because they had done surveys and—look, people who are purchasing health insurance are like people who are purchasing everything else, they'd like to get the best deal for the lowest price. What makes health care tricky is, when you buy a TV you can kind of see what the picture looks like; when you're buying health insurance, it's tempting to initially buy the cheapest thing—until if heaven forbid, you get sick and it turns out, gosh, I can't see the doctor I want or the specialist I want, or this is more inconvenient than I expected.

So what ended up happening was people bought, oftentimes, the cheapest insurance that they could. Insurance companies, wanting to get as much market share as possible, ended up creating very low-cost plans, but those are going to have restrictions on them. And that's not just if you're buying health insurance in Obamacare, that's generally how it is even when employers buy health insurance for their employees.

Now, I think that what we're seeing is insurers now making adjustments, saying, okay, we need to charge more. And that is something that, the good news is, appears to—may have stabilized—that might be kind of a one-time thing, and now we're in a position to be able to do an evaluation of, have we gotten this balance right, as you say?

We can't get health care for free. You're going to have to pay for it one way or another. Either the Government is going to pay more so that people don't have as many out-of-pocket costs—and that means, in some fashion, higher taxes for somebody—or individuals are going to have to pay more out of pocket in one way or another.

The same is true for employers. Either employers pay more for a really good health care package, but that takes something out of the employer's bottom line, or they're putting more costs onto workers in the form of higher deductibles and higher copays.

And I think that a lot of the good work that can be done in lowering costs had to do not with costs shifting, but with actually making the system work better. And we've done a lot of work on that. What I referred to earlier, incentivizing a system that instead of ordering five tests because doctors and providers are getting paid for the test, you now have a system where you're going to get reimbursed if the person gets healthy quicker and is not returned to the hospital. Well, it turns out that that can, over time, be a real cost reduction.

Those are the kinds of things that we're implementing in the system as a consequence of Obamacare. The more we do that kind of stuff the less we're going to see this cost shifting. But the intention has never been to say let's make it more expensive for people to get health care so they're going to access the system more. And I think the proof of that is, is that even though per-person costs have not gone up a lot, the overall spending on health care has gone up because more people have come into the system.

We want people to use the health care system. We just don't want them to use it in the emergency room. We want them to use it to stay healthy and smoking cessation plans and making sure that they're getting regular checkups and mammograms, those are the things that are ultimately going to save us as much money as we can.

Ms. Kliff. I have a wonky follow-up question.

The President. There you go. [*Laughter*] Of course.

Ms. Kliff. Since this is a wonk fest. What about controlling prices? We have some of the highest health care prices in the world in the United States. Most other developed countries, they regulate how much you can charge for an MRI, for an emergency room visit, for an appendectomy. That seems like it's really at the core of this tension, the fact that we have these very high prices. Americans don't go to the doctor more, we just pay a lot more when we go to the doctor.

The President. Right.

Ms. Kliff. That is something the health care law did not tackle. And I'm curious to hear you reflect on that and what you would think about the role of price controls in American medicine.

The President. Well, look, this is the irony of this whole debate, is the things that people are most dissatisfied with about Obamacare, about the Affordable Care Act, are things that essentially in other countries are solved by more government control, not less. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Kliff. Yes.

The President. And so Republicans are pointing at these things to stir up dissatisfaction, but when it comes to, all right, what's the solution for it, their answer is less government regulation and letting folks charge even more and doing whatever they want and letting the marketplace work its will.

I think that there are strengths to our system because we have a more market-based system. Our health care system is more innovative. Prescription drugs is probably the best example of this. It is true that we essentially come up with the new drugs in this country, because our drug companies are fat and wealthy enough that they can invest in the research and development. They make bigger profits, which they can, then, plow back into drug development. And essentially, we have a lot of other countries that are free riders on that system. So they can negotiate with the drug companies and force much lower prices, but they generally don't have a drug industry that develops new drugs.

That's true. This is an example of where you probably do want some balance to maintain innovation, but to have some tougher negotiations around the system as a whole. And we are trying to use Medicare as the place where, since there's no health care provider or stakeholder in the health care industry that doesn't in some ways want to get Medicare business, we're trying to use Medicare as a lever to get better deals for consumers and better prices for consumers, not just those in Medicare, but also people throughout the system.

But as I said, the irony is, is that when we tried to do that the people who are most resistant are the very Republican Members of Congress who are criticizing us or at least telling the American people that you should want lower prices on various procedures.

If we want to control prices for consumers more, then the marketplace by itself will not do that. And the reason is because health care is not exactly like other products. It's not like buying a flat-screen TV. If you're sick, or if your kid is sick, most of the time you're not in a position to negotiate right there and then. You can't walk out of the store and just say, well, I'm going to see if I can get a better deal. You're trying to figure out—like when Sasha got meningitis when she was 4 months old—make my child better, and that's all—and I'll worry about the costs later. And that's the mentality that most people have when it goes into health care.

So the traditional models of the marketplace don't work perfectly in the health care system. There are areas where we can increase marketplace competition. There are ways in which we can make it work better. But ultimately, if we want to really get at some of these costs, there has to be some more extensive regulation in certain areas than we currently have.

Ms. Kliff. So I recently took a trip to an area of Kentucky—on a slightly different topic—that saw some huge coverage gains under the health care law, but also voted overwhelmingly for President-elect Trump. And one of the people I met there was Kathy Oller, who is here with us today. She is an Obamacare enrollment worker who has signed up more than a thousand people for coverage. She supported you in 2008 and 2012, but voted for President-elect Trump in 2016 and expects him to improve on the Affordable Care Act. And she would like to ask you a question about that.

The President. Go ahead, Kathy. Is it working?

Corbin, KY, resident Kathy Oller. I don't know. [*Laughter*] Let's see if it's on.

The President. Yes, it's on.

Mr. Klein. Yes, it looks on.

Ms. Kliff. All right.

Ms. Oller. Oh, okay, I'm close to karaoke now. [*Laughter*] Hello, President Obama. And I'm so excited to meet you.

The President. It's good to see you.

Ms. Oller. Thanks. I'm a little bit nervous, as you could see. But over the years, I've enrolled

and talked to numerous Kentuckians, and I've signed up some for even the first time, so it was working, the Affordable Care Act. And also we've been, going over the years, and I've talked to people. But recently, we found out that there was fewer choices in our area, and the increase in the premiums and deductibles, and our facilities aren't even taking some of them. And many Kentuckians now are looking at the Affordable Care as unaffordable and unusable.

And I have the opportunity to ask you a few questions that you have probably went over, but how do you think this happened? How can we fix it? Do we start all over again? What do you think we should do?

The President. Good. Well, first of all, Kathy, I want to thank you for being out there enrolling people.

Ms. Oller. Thank you.

The President. That's been hugely important. And the second point I would make is that Kentucky is a place where this has really worked, and it's worked for two reasons.

One is, Kentucky expanded Medicaid. And we haven't talked a lot about that, but a big chunk of Obamacare was just making Medicaid accessible to more people. And those States that expanded Medicaid have seen a much bigger drop in the uninsured than those States who didn't.

And by the way, those States that didn't, they didn't do so just out of politics—I'll just be very blunt—because the Federal Government was going to pay for this Medicaid expansion. And States—there are some States, because they had all this uncompensated care, ended up making money by providing more health insurance to your people. It was a hard bargain—a hard deal to turn down, and yet you've got a number of States that turned it down mainly because Republican Governors and Republican State legislatures didn't want to make it work.

Kentucky, under Steve Beshear was one of those people that did expand Medicaid, had a really active program. Because I don't poll that well in Kentucky—[*laughter*]—they didn't call it Obamacare, they called it Connect—Kentucky Connect, right? [*Laughter*]

Audience member. Kynect.

The President. Kynect, right. And so there were a whole lot of people who said, well, we don't like Obamacare—[*laughter*]—but I like this program and we'll sign you up, right? You signed people up, you didn't tell them it was Obamacare all the time. [*Laughter*] And it's actually worked. Right?

Now, what is true in Kentucky, though, is true in some other States. You had a Governor who ran explicitly on the idea of rolling back Obamacare even though it was working. And so the State marketplace, the State exchange he dismantled, which means we had to shift everything onto the Federal exchange. Most people got shifted, but it indicated a lack of interest and effort on his part in making the thing work. He promised to roll back Medicaid, but he started realizing that wasn't as good politics as he thought it was when he was running, so he hasn't done that.

But what is also true is—and this is my main criticism of Obamacare, of the Affordable Care Act—is that the subsidies aren't as high as they probably should be for a lot of working people. If you don't qualify for Medicaid where you don't have to pay, for the most part, for your coverage, and instead, you're buying health insurance on the marketplace—so you're a working person, but you don't have a lot of money—and particularly if you are older, where you use the health care system more and you need a better benefit package than somebody 18 or 20 might, then there are families where the premiums are still too high.

And as I said earlier, there are some parts of the country where there are only a handful of hospitals and a few doctors, and where you don't have a lot of competition, and the insurers are looking, and they're saying, I'm—we're not going to make a lot of money there, so you don't end up having a lot of insurance plans in those areas.

So the two things that we could do that would really make it work even better for people in Kentucky would be, number one, provide more subsidies to folks who are working hard every day, but still find the premiums even with the subsidies hard to meet, and have

the public option for those communities where they're not getting a lot of competition and insurers aren't coming in.

The problem is, is that that's not what's being proposed by Mitch McConnell, the Senator from Kentucky. Instead, what he's proposing, I gather, is you're going to repeal the law, then you're going to come up with something, except you will have taken away all the—the way we pay for the subsidies for working people is, we're taxing wealthier folks at a little bit higher. So he wants to cut those taxes, and that money is going to—that money would be gone right away. And then he's going to promise you, or those people who you've been signing up, better health care, except there's not going to be any money to pay for it. And nobody has explained to me yet how that's going to work. [*Laughter*]

And so I think this takes me back to the point I made earlier. If in fact the people you've been signing up, the folks in your communities, are not fully satisfied with the benefits that they're getting now and are hopeful for something better, then at the very least, you should be putting pressure on your Members of Congress to say, show us exactly what the deal is going to be for us before you take away the deal that we've got. Because the people you sign up for, they may not be as happy as they'd like, but—tell me if I'm wrong—they like it better than not having any insurance at all.

Ms. Oller. Sure. And some never even had insurance.

The President. And some people didn't have insurance. And finally—because I get letters from folks who say, for the first time in my life—I have had a bad hip for 15 years and I've been pain-free for the first time because I finally got insurance. Right? So the answer is not for them not to have insurance. And if we go back to a system where they've got to buy it on their own, they're not going to buy it, because they'll have even less subsidy.

How much time do we got?

Mr. Klein. I think we're quite low.

The President. We've got low time? Because I've got all kinds of more stuff to say. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Klein. Well, it's your schedule. We're happy to keep you as long as you'd like. But——

The President. Well, why don't you—there are a couple points I want to make in closing——

Mr. Klein. Excellent.

The President. ——but why don't you ask some questions.

Mr. Klein. So one thing we haven't touched on yet in much detail is the delivery system reforms, which are a big part of the law. So what is a policy or experiment or change in that space that has overperformed your expectations? And what's one that has maybe not panned out as you'd liked or hoped?

The President. You know, I think a good example of something that's worked better than we expected or at least worked as well as we expected is the issue of hospital readmissions. Now, it turns out that a lot of times you go to the hospital, let's say, you get your appendix taken out, and then you go home, and then there's a complication, and then you have to go back into the hospital. That's obviously inconvenient for you, and it's expensive for the system as a whole. And it turns out that there are just a few things that you can do that help reduce people being readmitted.

First of all, making sure that the first procedure goes well, but secondly, making sure that there's good follow-up. So it might be that a hospital or a health care system pays for, when you do go home, you just getting some phone calls to remind you to take the medicine that you've got to take to make sure you heal properly, because if—they may have done a study, and it turns out that people forget to do what they're supposed to do, they don't follow exactly their doctor's instructions, and they can't afford to have a nurse in their house who's doing it for them. Well, maybe there are just some—a few things that can be done to help make sure that they do what they are supposed to do, and that way they don't have complications.

What we've seen is a significant reduction in hospital readmissions over the course of this law just by doing some smart incentivizing, just saying to the hospitals we'll reimburse you or we'll give you some other benefit for doing

smart follow-up. That's an area where I think we've made some real progress.

The other place—and this is connected—where I think we've got some good bipartisan support is just encouraging what's called—shifting from what's called fee-for-service payments, where you get paid by the procedure, which means that you may end up getting five tests instead of getting one test that's e-mailed to five providers who are treating you. And we've started to see some real movement when we say to the system as a whole we're going to pay you for outcomes: Did the patient do well? And that has been helpful.

In terms of areas where I think we haven't seen as much improvement as I'd like, it's probably—one thing that comes to mind is on the electronic medical records. Given—if you think about how wired and plugged in everybody is now—I mean, you can basically do everything off your phone. The fact that there are still just mountains of paperwork—[*laughter*]—and you don't understand what these bills are that still get sent to your house, and nobody—and the doctors still have to input stuff, and the nurses are spending all their time on all this administrative work—we put a big slug of money into trying to encourage everybody to digitalize, catch up with the rest of the world here.

And it's proven to be harder than we expected, partly because everybody has different systems, they don't all talk to each other. It requires retraining people in how to use them effectively. And I'm optimistic that over time it's inevitable that it's going to get better, because every other part of our lives, it's become paperless. But it's been a lot slower than I would have expected.

And some of it has to do with the fact that, as I said, it's decentralized and everybody has different systems. In some cases, you have, sort of, economic incentives that are pushing against making the system work better. For example, there are service providers—people make money on keeping people's medical records, and then—so making it easier for everybody to access each other's medical records means that there are some folks who could lose business. And that has turned out to be a little more complicated than I expected.

Ms. Kliff. Do you have any closing remarks? And one thing I'm interested in is, kind of, what you see your role in this debate we're gearing up for as.

The President. Well, let me make a couple of closing remarks. Number one, I think it is important to remember that just because people campaigned on repealing this law, it is a much more complicated process to repeal this law than I think was being presented on the campaign trail, as my Republican friends are discovering.

The way this process is going to work, there's this rushed vote that's taking place this week, next week to—quote, unquote—"repeal Obamacare." But really all that is, is it's a resolution that is then instructing these committees in Congress to start actually drafting a law that specifically would say what's being repealed and what's not. Then, after that, they'd have to make a decision about what's going to replace it and how long is that going to take. And that stretches the process out further.

And so I think, whether you originally supported Obamacare or you didn't, whether you like me or you don't, the one thing I would just ask all the American people to do is adopt the slogan of the great State of Missouri: "Show me." [*Laughter*] Show me. Do not rush this process.

And to Republicans, I would say: What are you scared of? You should—if you are absolutely convinced, as you have been adamant about for the last 7 years, that you can come up with something better, go ahead and come up with it. And I'll even cut you some slack for the fact that you've been saying you'd come up with something better for 7 years and I've never seen it. [*Laughter*] But we'll restart the clock.

It's interesting that we're here in Blair House because this is a place where I met, in front of the American people, with Republicans who had already indicated their adamant opposition to health care. And I sat with them for a couple hours—how long was it?

Former Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius. Eight.

The President. Eight hours. [*Laughter*] Kathleen Sebelius, who was my Secretary of Health and Human Services, remembers—for 8 hours, on live TV, to talk about here's why we're trying to do what we're doing here, and challenging them to come up with better answers than the ones we had come up with. And we spent a year of really significant debate.

And I would think that given that we now have proof that 20 million people do have health insurance, that we're at the lowest rate of uninsured in our history, that health care costs, rather than spiking way up, have actually gone up slower than they have in 50 years; given that the vast majority of people who get health insurance through Obamacare have said they're satisfied with their care and that they're better off than when they didn't have care; given that even though a lot of people don't know it, even if you're not getting health insurance through Obamacare, you've benefited, because if you get health insurance on the job, it now doesn't have a lifetime limit, it doesn't have fine print that could end up costing you a lot of money—given all those things, I would think that you'd at least want to explain to the American people what it is that you want to do. And that, I think, is a minimum expectation out of this Congress and out of the President-elect.

I'd make a second point, and that is that we just worked, on a bipartisan basis, to sign something called the Cures bill that included two really important bipartisan priorities. One was Joe Biden's Cancer Moonshot initiative—because we're seeing so many medical breakthroughs in so many areas that we have an opportunity to make a real dent in how we deal with cancer, which affects everybody in some fashion—somebody has been touched in their—in your family with this terrible disease. So we got a lot more money for research in that, and the bill also contained a big investment in opioid—the opioid challenge.

As many of you know, you're seeing more and more communities that are being ravaged by, initially, prescription drugs; then that ends up being a gateway into heroin, some of which, like synthetic heroin being produced called fentanyl, just has terrible rates of overdose deaths. And this is not an inner-city problem, per se, but this is reaching every community. In some ways, it's worse in a lot of rural communities.

So there was a bipartisan effort for us to put some more money into that. But here's the thing. If we just put money into cancer research, and we just put money into dealing with the opioid crisis, and now we're taking away money that is providing drug treatment services in those very same communities by repealing Obamacare, and taking away the ability to access a doctor to get new cancer treatments, then we're not really helping anybody. So that's a second point I want to make.

A third point I want to make is that I would encourage local communities to get involved in this process. And I think the—part of the problem with this whole law has been that the people who benefit aren't out there making noise, and the people who ideologically have opposed it have been really loud. Well, now is the time for people who have benefited or seen their families benefit to tell their stories.

Because, ultimately, this is not a political game. This is really something that affects people in the most personal ways. My friend Natoma Canfield is here in the front row. Some of you heard Natoma's story before, where—a cancer survivor who, because she had now a preexisting condition, was faced with either keeping her health insurance at such a high rate—the only way she could get health insurance with a preexisting condition was to basically pay so much that she could no longer afford to pay the mortgage on her house.

And I remember her writing to me, and I thought, that could be my mom. That could be yours. And that's not a choice that people should have to make. And when most people, even if they're not Obama supporters, hear Natoma's story or the stories of other people who have been helped, they know it's wrong to just take away their health care. And it becomes less about who's winning here in Washington. It becomes about, how are we doing right by our fellow Americans?

But those stories have to be heard. And I would just encourage people to start telling their stories. And tell their stories—you're not always going to get a lot of attention here in Washington because they want to know this vote and this insult that was hurled back-and-forth between whoever. But you know what, tell that story in your local newspapers. Talk to your local reporters. Congregations that are involved in caring for those in need, make sure that you're telling stories in church and in services so that people know.

Because the one thing that I'm convinced about is, the American people want to do the right thing. They just—it's hard to get good information, and unless you're reading Vox every day, which is hard to do——

Mr. Klein. It's not that hard to do. [*Laughter*]

The President. ——getting the details of all this policy is hard. It's complicated. You don't know what's true; you don't know what's not true.

I mean, those folks in Kentucky that you've signed up—there are a lot of people who voted for not just a President, but also for a Member of Congress who said, explicitly, we're going to eliminate this. Well, I understand why people might think, okay, well, he's going to eliminate it, but he will give us something better. But this is hard. And what you don't want is a situation where they make a promise that they can't keep.

And I've worked on this a long time. If we had had a better way to do this, we would have done it. It would have been in my interest to do it, because I knew I was going to be judged on whether or not it worked. And those areas that don't work have to do with there not being enough money in the system and not having a public option. And I'm more than happy to put those fixes in place, anytime, anyplace. But I—that's not, so far, what the Republicans are proposing. You deserve to know what it is that they're doing.

So, anyway, I appreciate you guys taking the time to tell the story.

Mr. Klein. But, real quick, Sarah had asked about your role going forward.

The President. Oh, my role going forward?

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Well, look, I mean, I do deserve a little sleep. [*Laughter*] And I've got to take Michelle on a vacation so—[*laughter*]. But I've said consistently that the most important office in a democracy is the office of citizen. And I will be a citizen who still remembers what it was like when his mom died of cancer younger than I am now, and who didn't have all the insurance and disability insurance and support and wasn't using the health care system enough to have early detection that might have prevented her from passing away.

You know, Michelle's dad had multiple sclerosis, MS, but was part of that generation that just didn't have a lot of expectations about health care and so just kind of suffered for years. And I mean, those are our stories. So it's not like I'm going to suddenly fade away on this. I will be a part of the work of our fellow citizens in trying to make sure that the wealthiest country on Earth is able to do the same thing that every other advanced country is able to do.

I mean, it's not as if this has never been done before. You—if you're in Canada, you've got health care, no matter who you are. If you're in France, you've got health care. If you're in England, you've got health care. If you're in Australia, you've got health care. If you're in New Zealand, you've got health care.

I remember talking to my friend John Key, who was the Prime Minister of New Zealand. He is part of the Conservative Party in New Zealand. And he said to me in the middle of this health care debate, he said, boy, if I proposed that we took away people's health care, that we repealed it, I'd be run out of office by my own party. [*Laughter*] Because it was just assumed that, in a country this wealthy that this is one of the basic rights, not privileges, of citizenship in a well-to-do country like ours.

So I'll be working with all of you. But my voice is going to be less important than the voices of people who are directly affected. And so I would urge everybody to make your voice heard. Now is the time to do it.

The people who have opposed this were opposing it not based on facts, but were opposing

it based on sort of an ideological concern about expansion of the state and sort of taxes on wealthier people that are helping people who don't have as much money. And I respect their role in the democracy. They've been really fighting hard. Well, folks here got to fight just as hard.

My final piece of advice would be to the news media, which is, we—generally speaking, when Obamacare has worked well, it wasn't attributed to Obamacare, and when there were problems, they got front-page headlines. And I think that, hopefully, now is a time where people can be a little—this doesn't apply to Vox, by the way. [*Laughter*] But I think it would be a good time for people to be a little more measured and take a look at what are the facts of this thing. Because the stakes are high.

Even on this whole premium issue—increase issue that happened right before the election, it is true, as I said, that insurers adjusted and hiked premiums. But I kept on trying to explain, number one, if you're getting a tax subsidy, this wasn't going to affect your out-of-pocket costs because the tax credit would just go up. But nobody kind of heard that.

And number two, these increases in premiums only applied to people who were buying health insurance on the exchanges. In fact, 85 percent of the people don't get health insurance through Obamacare. And for you, your health care premiums actually have gone up a lot less since Obamacare was passed than they did before Obamacare was passed. The average family has probably saved about $3,000 in lower health care premiums than if you had seen those same health care cost trends increased at the pace that they did before the law was passed. But I didn't see a lot of headlines about that, but—which I understand, I mean because it's not controversial enough, or it's a little bit too complicated to get in a soundbite.

So that's why the individual voice is so important. And that's why I'm so appreciative of journalists who actually know what they're talking about. Thank you.

Mr. Klein. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. All right. Thanks. Appreciate it.

Ms. Kliff. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:15 a.m. in the Garden Room at the Blair House. In his remarks, he referred to former President George W. Bush; Sen. Bernard Sanders, in his former capacity as a Democratic Presidential candidate; 2012 Republican Presidential nominee W. Mitt Romney; former Gov. Steven L. Beshear and Gov. Matthew G. Bevin of Kentucky; and Medina, OH, resident and health care reform advocate Natoma A. Canfield.

Statement on the Observance of Orthodox Christmas
January 6, 2017

Michelle and I wish a joyful Christmas to Orthodox Christians in the United States and around the world. During this sacred season, we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ and reflect on the commandment that we love one another as He has loved us. We are grateful for the many ways in which Orthodox Christians have shown such love to their neighbors and strengthened both religious and civic bonds. As worship services take place in churches across the Nation and around the world, we reaffirm our commitment to protect the universal and inalienable right of all people to practice their faith and stand in solidarity with communities and congregations that have been persecuted and subjected to violent attacks. As we enter this new year, we join our Orthodox brothers and sisters in praying and working for peace and justice.

The President's Weekly Address
January 7, 2017

Since the days of George Washington, Presidents have delivered some form of final message while in office, a Farewell Address to the American people. On Tuesday night, in Chicago, I'll deliver mine. I chose Chicago not only because it's my hometown, where I met my wife and we started a family, but also because it's really where my career in public service began.

The running thread through my career has been the notion that when ordinary people get involved and get engaged and come together in collective effort, things change for the better. That's the belief at the heart of this precious American experiment in self-government. It's what gives work and purpose to each new generation.

It's easy to lose sight of that truth in the day-to-day back and forth of Washington or our minute-to-minute news cycles. But remember that America is a story told over a longer time horizon, in fits and starts, punctuated at times by hardship, but ultimately written by generations of citizens who've somehow worked together, without fanfare, to form a more perfect Union.

Over the past 8 years, we've added our own new chapter to that story. Together, we've turned an economy that was shrinking and losing jobs into one that's growing and creating jobs, with poverty falling, incomes rising, and wages that have jumped faster over the past few years than at any time in the past four decades.

Together, we've achieved what eluded politicians of both parties for a century: We've moved 20 million more Americans from uninsured to insured, ending the days of discrimination against up to half of Americans who have a preexisting condition, and secured new rights and protections for everybody with health insurance.

Together, we've brought home most of our brave troops from Iraq and Afghanistan, took bin Laden and thousands of other terrorists off the battlefield for good. We've opened a new chapter with the people of Cuba, shut down Iran's nuclear weapons program without firing a single shot, and brought the world together around a climate agreement that could save this planet for future generations.

By these measures and many more, we have made America a better, stronger place for the generation that follows ours. We've run our leg in a long journey of progress, knowing that our work is and will always be unfinished. And that's the imperative of citizenship: the idea that with hard work, people who love their country can change it. That will be the focus of my farewell to you this Tuesday, and I hope you'll tune in.

Thanks, and have a great weekend.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:20 p.m. on January 5 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast on January 7. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 6, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on January 7. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Farewell Address to the Nation From Chicago, Illinois
January 10, 2017

The President. Hello, Chicago! It's good to be home! Thank you. Thank you, everybody. Thank you. Thank you so much. Thank you. It's good to be home. Thanks. All right, everybody sit down. We're on live TV here. I've got to move. Come on. [*Laughter*] I—you can tell that I'm a lame duck, because nobody's following instructions. [*Laughter*] Everybody, have a seat.

My fellow Americans, Michelle and I have been so touched by all the well wishes that

we've received over the past few weeks. But tonight, tonight it's my turn to say thanks. Whether we have seen eye to eye or rarely agreed at all, my conversations with you, the American people, in living rooms and in schools, at farms, on factory floors, at diners and on distant military outposts—those conversations are what have kept me honest and kept me inspired and kept me going. And every day, I have learned from you. You made me a better President, and you made me a better man.

So I first came to Chicago when I was in my early twenties. And I was still trying to figure out who I was, still searching for a purpose in my life. And it was a neighborhood not far from here where I began working with church groups in the shadows of closed steel mills. It was on these streets where I witnessed the power of faith and the quiet dignity of working people in the face of struggle and loss.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. I can't do that. [*Laughter*]

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Now, this is where I learned that change only happens when ordinary people get involved and they get engaged and they come together to demand it.

After 8 years as your President, I still believe that. And it's not just my belief, it's the beating heart of our American idea, our bold experiment in self-government. It's the conviction that we are all created equal, endowed by our Creator with certain unalienable rights, among them life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. It's the insistence that these rights, while self-evident, have never been self-executing; that we, the people, through the instrument of our democracy, can form a more perfect Union.

What a radical idea, the great gift that our Founders gave to us: the freedom to chase our individual dreams through our sweat and toil and imagination, and the imperative to strive together as well, to achieve a common good, a greater good.

For 240 years, our Nation's call to citizenship has given work and purpose to each new generation. It's what led patriots to choose republic over tyranny, pioneers to trek west, slaves to brave that makeshift railroad to freedom. It's what pulled immigrants and refugees across oceans and the Rio Grande. It's what pushed women to reach for the ballot. It's what powered workers to organize. It's why GIs gave their lives at Omaha Beach and Iwo Jima, Iraq and Afghanistan, and why men and women from Selma to Stonewall were prepared to give theirs as well.

So that's what we mean when we say America's exceptional: not that our Nation's been flawless from the start, but that we have shown the capacity to change and make life better for those who follow. Yes, our progress has been uneven. The work of democracy has always been hard. It's always been contentious. Sometimes, it's been bloody. For every two steps forward, it often feels we take one step back. But the long sweep of America has been defined by forward motion, a constant widening of our founding creed to embrace all and not just some.

If I had told you 8 years ago that America would reverse a great recession, reboot our auto industry, and unleash the longest stretch of job creation in our history; if I had told you that we would open up a new chapter with the Cuban people, shut down Iran's nuclear weapons program without firing a shot, take out the mastermind of 9/11; if I had told you that we would win marriage equality and secure the right to health insurance for another 20 million of our fellow citizens—if I had told you all that, you might have said our sights were set a little too high. But that's what we did. That's what you did.

You were the change. You answered people's hopes, and because of you, by almost every measure, America is a better, stronger place than it was when we started.

In 10 days, the world will witness a hallmark of our democracy——

Audience members. No!

The President. No, no, no. The peaceful transfer of power from one freely elected President to the next. I committed to President-elect Trump that my administration would

ensure the smoothest possible transition, just as President Bush did for me. Because it's up to all of us to make sure our Government can help us meet the many challenges we still face.

We have what we need to do so. We have everything we need to meet those challenges. After all, we remain the wealthiest, most powerful, and most respected nation on Earth. Our youth, our drive, our diversity and openness, our boundless capacity for risk and reinvention means that the future should be ours. But that potential will only be realized if our democracy works; only if our politics better reflects the decency of our people; only if all of us, regardless of party affiliation or particular interests, help restore the sense of common purpose that we so badly need right now.

And that's what I want to focus on tonight: the state of our democracy. Understand, democracy does not require uniformity. Our Founders argued, they quarreled, and eventually, they compromised. They expected us to do the same. But they knew that democracy does require a basic sense of solidarity: the idea that for all our outward differences, we're all in this together; that we rise or fall as one.

There have been moments throughout our history that threatened that solidarity. And the beginning of this century has been one of those times. A shrinking world, growing inequality, demographic change, and the specter of terrorism—these forces haven't just tested our security and our prosperity, but are testing our democracy as well. And how we meet these challenges to our democracy will determine our ability to educate our kids and create good jobs and protect our homeland. In other words, it will determine our future.

To begin with, our democracy won't work without a sense that everyone has economic opportunity. And the good news is that today the economy is growing again. Wages, incomes, home values, and retirement accounts are all rising again. Poverty is falling again. The wealthy are paying a fairer share of taxes even as the stock market shatters records. The unemployment rate is near a 10-year low. The uninsured rate has never, ever been lower. Health care costs are rising at the slowest rate in 50 years. And I've said and I mean it: If anyone can put together a plan that is demonstrably better than the improvements we've made to our health care system, that covers as many people at less cost, I will publicly support it.

Because that, after all, is why we serve. Not to score points or take credit, but to make people's lives better.

But for all the real progress that we've made, we know it's not enough. Our economy doesn't work as well or grow as fast when a few prosper at the expense of a growing middle class and ladders for folks who want to get into the middle class. That's the economic argument. But stark inequality is also corrosive to our democratic idea. While the top 1 percent has amassed a bigger share of wealth and income, too many of our families, in inner cities and in rural counties, have been left behind—the laid off factory worker, the waitress or health care worker who's just barely getting by and struggling to pay the bills—convinced that the game is fixed against them, that their Government only serves the interests of the powerful. That's a recipe for more cynicism and polarization in our politics.

But there are no quick fixes to this long-term trend. I agree, our trade should be fair and not just free. But the next wave of economic dislocations won't come from overseas. It will come from the relentless pace of automation that makes a lot of good, middle class jobs obsolete.

And so we're going to have to forge a new social compact to guarantee all our kids the education they need, to give workers the power to unionize for better wages, to update the social safety net to reflect the way we live now, and make more reforms to the Tax Code so corporations and individuals who reap the most from this new economy don't avoid their obligations to the country that's made their very success possible.

We can argue about how to best achieve these goals. But we can't be complacent about the goals themselves. For if we don't create opportunity for all people, the disaffection and division that has stalled our progress will only sharpen in years to come.

There's a second threat to our democracy, and this one is as old as our Nation itself. After my election, there was talk of a postracial America. And such a vision, however well intended, was never realistic. Race remains a potent and often divisive force in our society. Now, I've lived long enough to know that race relations are better than they were 10 or 20 or 30 years ago, no matter what some folks say. You can see it not just in statistics, you see it in the attitudes of young Americans across the political spectrum.

But we're not where we need to be. And all of us have more work to do. If every economic issue is framed as a struggle between a hardworking White middle class and an undeserving minority, then workers of all shades are going to be left fighting for scraps while the wealthy withdraw further into their private enclaves. If we're unwilling to invest in the children of immigrants, just because they don't look like us, we will diminish the prospects of our own children, because those Brown kids will represent a larger and larger share of America's workforce. And we have shown that our economy doesn't have to be a zero-sum game. Last year, incomes rose for all races, all age groups, for men and for women.

So, if we're going to be serious about race going forward, we need to uphold laws against discrimination: in hiring and in housing and in education and in the criminal justice system. That is what our Constitution and our highest ideals require.

But laws alone won't be enough. Hearts must change. They won't change overnight. Social attitudes oftentimes take generations to change. But if our democracy is to work the way it should in this increasingly diverse Nation, then each one of us need to try to heed the advice of a great character in American fiction, Atticus Finch, who said, "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view . . . until you climb into his skin and walk around in it."

For Blacks and other minority groups, that means tying our own very real struggles for justice to the challenges that a lot of people in this country face, not only the refugee or the immigrant or the rural poor or the transgender American, but also the middle-aged White guy who, from the outside, may seem like he's got advantages, but has seen his world upended by economic and cultural and technological change. We have to pay attention and listen.

For White Americans, it means acknowledging that the effects of slavery and Jim Crow didn't suddenly vanish in the sixties, that when minority groups voice discontent, they're not just engaging in reverse racism or practicing political correctness. When they wage peaceful protest, they're not demanding special treatment, but the equal treatment that our Founders promised.

For native-born Americans, it means reminding ourselves that the stereotypes about immigrants today were said, almost word for word, about the Irish and Italians and Poles, who it was said were going to destroy the fundamental character of America. And as it turned out, America wasn't weakened by the presence of these newcomers; these newcomers embraced this Nation's creed, and this Nation was strengthened.

So, regardless of the station that we occupy, we all have to try harder. We all have to start with the premise that each of our fellow citizens loves this country just as much as we do; that they value hard work and family just like we do; that their children are just as curious and hopeful and worthy of love as our own.

And that's not easy to do. For too many of us, it's become safer to retreat into our own bubbles, whether in our neighborhoods or on college campuses or places of worship or especially our social media feeds, surrounded by people who look like us and share the same political outlook and never challenge our assumptions. And the rise of naked partisanship and increasing economic and regional stratification, the splintering of our media into a channel for every taste, all this makes this great sorting seem natural, even inevitable. And increasingly, we become so secure in our bubbles that we start accepting only information, whether it's true or not, that fits our opinions, instead of basing our opinions on the evidence that is out there.

And this trend represents a third threat to our democracy. Look, politics is a battle of ideas. That's how our democracy was designed. In the course of a healthy debate, we prioritize different goals and the different means of reaching them. But without some common baseline of facts, without a willingness to admit new information and concede that your opponent might be making a fair point and that science and reason matter, then we're going to keep talking past each other, and we'll make common ground and compromise impossible.

And isn't that part of what so often makes politics dispiriting? How can elected officials rage about deficits when we propose to spend money on preschool for kids, but not when we're cutting taxes for corporations? How do we excuse ethical lapses in our own party, but pounce when the other party does the same thing? It's not just dishonest, this selective sorting of the facts, it's self-defeating. Because, as my mom used to tell me, reality has a way of catching up with you.

Take the challenge of climate change. In just 8 years, we've halved our dependence on foreign oil, we've doubled our renewable energy, we've led the world to an agreement that has the promise to save this planet. But without bolder action, our children won't have time to debate the existence of climate change. They'll be busy dealing with its effects: more environmental disasters, more economic disruptions, waves of climate refugees seeking sanctuary.

Now, we can and should argue about the best approach to solve the problem. But to simply deny the problem not only betrays future generations, it betrays the essential spirit of this country, the essential spirit of innovation and practical problem-solving that guided our Founders.

It is that spirit, born of the Enlightenment, that made us an economic powerhouse: the spirit that took flight at Kitty Hawk and Cape Canaveral, the spirit that cures disease and put a computer in every pocket.

It's that spirit, a faith in reason and enterprise and the primacy of right over might, that allowed us to resist the lure of fascism and tyranny during the Great Depression; that allowed us to build a post–World War II order with other democracies, an order based not just on military power or national affiliations, but built on principles: the rule of law, human rights, freedom of religion and speech and assembly, and an independent press.

That order is now being challenged, first by violent fanatics who claim to speak for Islam, more recently by autocrats in foreign capitals who see free markets and open democracies and civil society itself as a threat to their power. The peril each poses to our democracy is more far-reaching than a car bomb or a missile. They represent the fear of change; the fear of people who look or speak or pray differently; a contempt for the rule of law that holds leaders accountable; an intolerance of dissent and free thought; a belief that the sword or the gun or the bomb or the propaganda machine is the ultimate arbiter of what's true and what's right.

Because of the extraordinary courage of our men and women in uniform, because of our intelligence officers and law enforcement and diplomats who support our troops, no foreign terrorist organization has successfully planned and executed an attack on our homeland these past 8 years. And although Boston and Orlando and San Bernardino and Fort Hood remind us of how dangerous radicalization can be, our law enforcement agencies are more effective and vigilant than ever. We have taken out tens of thousands of terrorists, including bin Laden. The global coalition we're leading against ISIL has taken out their leaders and taken away about half their territory. ISIL will be destroyed, and no one who threatens America will ever be safe.

And to all who serve or have served, it has been the honor of my lifetime to be your Commander in Chief. And we all owe you a deep debt of gratitude.

But protecting our way of life, that's not just the job of our military. Democracy can buckle when it gives in to fear. So just as we, as citizens, must remain vigilant against external aggression, we must guard against a weakening of the values that make us who we are.

And that's why, for the past 8 years, I've worked to put the fight against terrorism on a firmer legal footing. That's why we've ended torture, worked to close Gitmo, reformed our laws governing surveillance to protect privacy and civil liberties. That's why I reject discrimination against Muslim Americans, who are just as patriotic as we are.

That's why we cannot withdraw from big global fights: to expand democracy and human rights and women's rights and LGBT rights. No matter how imperfect our efforts, no matter how expedient ignoring such values may seem, that's part of defending America. For the fight against extremism and intolerance and sectarianism and chauvinism are of a piece with the fight against authoritarianism and nationalist aggression. If the scope of freedom and respect for the rule of law shrinks around the world, the likelihood of war within and between nations increases, and our own freedoms will eventually be threatened.

So let's be vigilant, but not afraid. ISIL will try to kill innocent people, but they cannot defeat America unless we betray our Constitution and our principles in the fight. Rivals like Russia or China cannot match our influence around the world, unless we give up what we stand for and turn ourselves into just another big country that bullies smaller neighbors.

Which brings me to my final point: Our democracy is threatened whenever we take it for granted. All of us, regardless of party, should be throwing ourselves into the task of rebuilding our democratic institutions. When voting rates in America are some of the lowest among advanced democracies, we should be making it easier, not harder, to vote. When trust in our institutions is low, we should reduce the corrosive influence of money in our politics and insist on the principles of transparency and ethics in public service. When Congress is dysfunctional, we should draw our congressional districts to encourage politicians to cater to common sense and not rigid extremes.

But remember, none of this happens on its own. All of this depends on our participation; on each of us accepting the responsibility of citizenship, regardless of which way the pendulum of power happens to be swinging.

Our Constitution is a remarkable, beautiful gift. But it's really just a piece of parchment. It has no power on its own. We, the people, give it power. We, the people, give it meaning with our participation and with the choices that we make and the alliances that we forge. Whether or not we stand up for our freedoms, whether or not we respect and enforce the rule of law, that's up to us. America is no fragile thing, but the gains of our long journey to freedom are not assured.

In his own Farewell Address, George Washington wrote that self-government is the underpinning of our safety, prosperity, and liberty, but "from different causes and from different quarters much pains will be taken . . . to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth." And so we have to preserve this truth with "jealous anxiety," that we should reject "the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest or to enfeeble the sacred ties" that make us one.

America, we weaken those ties when we allow our political dialogue to become so corrosive that people of good character aren't even willing to enter into public service; so coarse with rancor that Americans with whom we disagree are seen not just as misguided, but as malevolent. We weaken those ties when we define some of us as more American than others, when we write off the whole system as inevitably corrupt, and when we sit back and blame the leaders we elect without examining our own role in electing them.

It falls to each of us to be those anxious, jealous guardians of our democracy; to embrace the joyous task we've been given to continually try to improve this great Nation of ours. Because for all our outward differences, we, in fact, all share the same proud title, the most important office in a democracy: citizen. Citizen.

So, you see, that's what our democracy demands. It needs you. Not just when there's an election, not just when your own narrow interest is at stake, but over the full span of a lifetime. If you're tired of arguing with strangers

on the Internet—[*laughter*]—try talking with one of them in real life. If something needs fixing, then lace up your shoes and do some organizing. If you're disappointed by your elected officials, grab a clipboard, get some signatures, and run for office yourself. Show up. Dive in. Stay at it.

Sometimes, you'll win. Sometimes, you'll lose. Presuming a reservoir of goodness in other people, that can be a risk, and there will be times when the process will disappoint you. But for those of us fortunate enough to have been part of this work and to see it up close, let me tell you, it can energize and inspire. And more often than not, your faith in America—and in Americans—will be confirmed.

Mine sure has been. Over the course of these 8 years, I've seen the hopeful faces of young graduates and our newest military officers. I have mourned with grieving families searching for answers and found grace in a Charleston church. I've seen our scientists help a paralyzed man regain his sense of touch. I've seen wounded warriors who at points were given up for dead walk again. I've seen our doctors and volunteers rebuild after earthquakes and stop pandemics in their tracks. I've seen the youngest of children remind us through their actions and through their generosity of our obligations to care for refugees or work for peace and, above all, to look out for each other.

So that faith that I placed all those years ago, not far from here, in the power of ordinary Americans to bring about change, that faith has been rewarded in ways I could not have possibly imagined. And I hope your faith has too. Some of you here tonight or watching at home, you were there with us in 2004, in 2008, 2012; maybe you still can't believe we pulled this whole thing off. [*Laughter*] Let me tell you, you're not the only ones. [*Laughter*]

Michelle—[*applause*]. Michelle LaVaughn Robinson, girl of the South Side, for the past 25 years, you have not only been my wife and mother of my children, you have been my best friend. You took on a role you didn't ask for, and you made it your own, with grace and with grit and with style and good humor. You made the White House a place that belongs to everybody. And a new generation sets its sights higher because it has you as a role model. So you have made me proud. And you have made the country proud.

Malia and Sasha, under the strangest of circumstances, you have become two amazing young women. You are smart, and you are beautiful, but more importantly, you are kind, and you are thoughtful, and you are full of passion. And you wore the burden of years in the spotlight so easily. Of all that I've done in my life, I am most proud to be your dad.

To Joe Biden, the scrappy kid from Scranton who became Delaware's favorite son, you were the first decision I made as a nominee, and it was the best. Not just because you have been a great Vice President, but because in the bargain, I gained a brother. And we love you and Jill like family, and your friendship has been one of the great joys of our lives.

To my remarkable staff: For 8 years—and for some of you, a whole lot more—I have drawn from your energy, and every day, I tried to reflect back what you displayed: heart and character and idealism. I've watched you grow up, get married, have kids, start incredible new journeys of your own. Even when times got tough and frustrating, you never let Washington get the better of you. You guarded against cynicism. And the only thing that makes me prouder than all the good that we've done is the thought of all the amazing things that you are going to achieve from here.

And to all of you out there—every organizer who moved to an unfamiliar town, every kind family who welcomed them in, every volunteer who knocked on doors, every young person who cast a ballot for the first time, every American who lived and breathed the hard work of change—you are the best supporters and organizers anybody could ever hope for, and I will be forever grateful. Because you did change the world. You did.

And that's why I leave this stage tonight even more optimistic about this country than when we started. Because I know our work has not only helped so many Americans, it has inspired so many Americans, especially so many

young people out there, to believe that you can make a difference, to hitch your wagon to something bigger than yourselves.

Let me tell you, this generation coming up—unselfish, altruistic, creative, patriotic—I've seen you in every corner of the country. You believe in a fair and just and inclusive America. You know that constant change has been America's hallmark, that it's not something to fear but something to embrace. You are willing to carry this hard work of democracy forward. You'll soon outnumber all of us, and I believe as a result the future is in good hands.

My fellow Americans, it has been the honor of my life to serve you. I won't stop. In fact, I will be right there with you, as a citizen, for all my remaining days. But for now, whether you are young or whether you're young at heart, I do have one final ask of you as your President, the same thing I asked when you took a chance on me 8 years ago. I'm asking you to believe: not in my ability to bring about change, but in yours.

I am asking you to hold fast to that faith written into our founding documents, that idea whispered by slaves and abolitionists, that spirit sung by immigrants and homesteaders and those who marched for justice, that creed reaffirmed by those who planted flags from foreign battlefields to the surface of the Moon, a creed at the core of every American whose story is not yet written: Yes, we can.

Yes, we did. Yes, we can.

Thank you. God bless you. May God continue to bless the United States of America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:02 p.m. in Hall D at McCormick Place East's Lakeside Center. In his remarks, he referred to former President George W. Bush; and Dunbar, PA, resident Nathan Copeland, a patient at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center in Pittsburgh, PA. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Vice President Joe Biden

January 12, 2017

The President. Hey! Joe Biden. All right, that's enough. Don't want to embarrass the guy. [*Laughter*]

Welcome to the White House, everybody. As I have already delivered my Farewell Address, I will try to be relatively brief. [*Laughter*] But I just wanted to get some folks together to pay tribute to somebody who has not only been by my side for the duration of this amazing journey, but somebody who has devoted his entire professional life to service to this country, the best Vice President America has ever had, Mr. Joe Biden. [*Applause*] Hey!

This also gives the Internet one last chance to talk about our bromance. [*Laughter*] This has been quite a ride. It was 8½ years ago that I chose Joe to be my Vice President. There has not been a single moment since that time that I've doubted the wisdom of that decision. He was the best possible choice, not just for me, but for the American people. This is an extraordinary man with an extraordinary career in public service. This is somebody the people of Delaware sent to the Senate as quickly as they possibly could—[*laughter*]—elected at age 29.

For more than a dozen years apiece, he served as chair or ranking member of the Judiciary and Foreign Relation Committees. Domestically, he championed landmark legislation to make our communities safer, to protect our women from violence. Internationally, his wisdom and capacity to build relationships has shaped our Nation's response to the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain, to counterterrorism, Iraq, Afghanistan.

And for the past 8 years, he could not have been a more devoted or effective partner in

the progress that we've made. He fought to make college more affordable and revitalize American manufacturing as the head of our Middle Class Task Force. He suited up for our Cancer Moonshot, giving hope to millions of Americans touched by this disease.

He led our efforts to combat gun violence. And he rooted out any possible misappropriations that might have occurred, and as a consequence, the Recovery Act worked as well as just about any large-scale stimulus project has ever worked in this country. He visited college after college and made friends with Lady Gaga—[*laughter*]—for our "It's On Us" campaign against campus sexual assault. And when the Pope visited, Joe was even kind enough to let me talk to the Holiness as well. [*Laughter*]

Behind the scenes, Joe's candid, honest counsel has made me a better President and a better Commander in Chief. From the Situation Room to our weekly lunches, to our huddles after everybody else has cleared out of the room, he's been unafraid to give it to me straight, even if we disagree—in fact, especially when we disagree.

And all of this makes him, I believe, the finest Vice President we have ever seen. And I also think he has been a lion of American history. The best part is, he's nowhere close to finished. In the years ahead, as a citizen, he will continue to build on that legacy, internationally and domestically. He's got a voice of vision and reason and optimism and love for people. And we're going to need that spirit and that vision as we continue to try to make our world safer and to make sure that everybody has got a fair shot in this country.

So, all told, that's a pretty remarkable legacy, an amazing career in public service. It is, as Joe once said, a big deal. [*Laughter*] It is.

But we all know that, on its own, his work—this list of accomplishments, the amazing résumé—does not capture the full measure of Joe Biden. I have not mentioned Amtrak yet or aviators. [*Laughter*] Literally. [*Laughter*]

Vice President Biden. Oh, God!

The President. Folks don't just feel like they know Joe the politician, they feel like they know the person: what makes him laugh, what he believes, what he cares about, and where he came from. Pretty much every time he speaks, he treats us to some wisdom from the nuns who taught him in grade school—[*laughter*]—or an old Senate colleague.

But of course, more frequently cited—Catherine and Joseph, Sr., his mom and dad: "No one's better than you, but you're better than nobody." [*Laughter*] "Bravery resides in every heart, and yours is fierce and clear." "And when you get knocked down, Joey, get up. Get up." [*Laughter*] "Get up."

That's where he got those broad shoulders. That's where he got that Biden heart. And through his life, through trial after trial, he has never once forgotten the values and the moral fiber that made him who he is. That's what steels his faith in God, and in America, and in his friends, and in all of us.

When Joe talks to autoworkers whose livelihoods he helped save, we hear the son of a man who once knew the pain of having to tell his kids that he had lost his job. When Joe talks about hope and opportunity for our children, we hear the father who rode the rails home every night so that he could be there to tuck his kids into bed. When Joe sticks up for the little guy, we hear the young boy who used to stand in front of the mirror, reciting Yeats or Emerson, studying the muscles in his face, determined to vanquish a debilitating stutter. When Joe talks to Gold Star families who have lost a hero, we hear a kindred spirit: another father of an American veteran, somebody whose faith has been tested and who has been forced to wander through the darkness himself and who knows who to lean on to find the light.

So that's Joe Biden: a resilient and loyal and humble servant and a patriot. But most of all, a family man. Starts with Jill, captain of the Vice Squad. [*Laughter*] The—only the Second Lady in our history to keep her regular day job. Jill says, teaching isn't what she does, it's who she is. A few days after Joe and I were inaugurated in 2009, she was back in the classroom teaching. That's why when our administration worked to strengthen community colleges, we looked to Jill to lead the way.

She's also traveled the world to boost education and empowerment for women. And as a Blue Star mom, her work with Michelle to honor our military families will go down in history as one of the most lasting and powerful efforts of this administration.

Of course, like Joe, Jill's work is only part of the story. She just seems to walk this Earth so lightly, spreads her joy so freely. And she reminds us that although we're in a serious business, we don't have to take ourselves too seriously. She's quick with a laugh or a practical joke, disguising herself as a server at a party she once hosted—[*laughter*]—to liven the mood. She once hid in the overhead compartment of Air Force Two to scare the senior staff. [*Laughter*] Because why not? She seems to have a sixth sense of when to send a note of encouragement to a friend or a staffer, a simple thank you or a box of macaroons.

She is one of the best, most genuine people that I've met not just in politics, but in my entire life. She is grounded and caring and generous and funny, and that's why Joe is proud to introduce himself as "Jill Biden's husband." [*Laughter*]

And to see them together is to see what real love looks like, through thick and thin, good times and bad. It's an all-American love story. And Jill once surprised Joe by painting hearts on his office windows for Valentine's Day.

And then there are these Biden kids and grandkids. They're everywhere. [*Laughter*] They're all good looking. [*Laughter*] Hunter and Ashley, who lived out that family creed of raising good families and looking out for the least of our brothers and sisters. Beau, who is watching over us with those broad shoulders and mighty heart himself, a man who left a beautiful legacy and inspired an entire nation. Naomi and Finn and Maisy and Natalie and little Hunter, grandchildren who are the light of Joe's eyes and gives him an excuse to bust out the squirt gun around the pool. [*Laughter*] This is the kind of family that built this country.

That's why my family is so proud to call ourselves honorary Bidens. [*Laughter*] As Yeats put it—because I had to quote an Irish poet and Seamus Heaney was taken—[*laughter*]—"Think where man's glory most begins and ends, and say my glory was I had such friends."

Away from the camera, Jill and Michelle have each other's backs just as much as when they're out championing our troops. Our girls are close, best friends at school, inviting each other for vacations and sleepovers. Even though our terms are nearly over, one of the greatest gifts of these past 8 years is that we're forever bonded as a family.

But of course, I know that the Obamas are not the only ones who feel like they're part of the Biden clan, because Joe's heart has radiated around this room. You see it in the enduring friendships he's forged with folks of every stripe and background up on Capitol Hill. You see it in the way that his eyes light up when he finds somebody in a rope line from Scranton. [*Laughter*] Or just the tiniest towns in Delaware. [*Laughter*] You see it in the incredible loyalty of his staff, the team who knows that family always comes before work because Joe tells them so every day, the team that reflects their boss's humble service. Here in this building, where there have been no turf wars between our staffs because everybody here has understood that we were all on the same mission and shared the same values, there has just been cooperation and camaraderie. And that is rare. It's a testament to Joe and the tone that he's set.

And finally, you see Joe's heart in the way he consoles families dealing with cancer backstage after an event, when he meets kids fighting through a stutter of their own; he gives them his private phone number and keeps in touch with them long after. To know Joe Biden is to know that love without pretense, service without self-regard, and to live life fully.

As one of his long-time colleagues in the Senate, who happened to be a Republican, once said: "If you can't admire Joe Biden as a person, you've got a problem." [*Laughter*] "He is as good a man as God ever created."

So, Joe, for your faith in your fellow Americans, for your love of country, and for your lifetime of service that will endure through the generations, I'd like to ask the Military Aide to join us on stage.

For the final time as President, I am pleased to award our Nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

And for the first and only time in my Presidency, I will bestow this medal with an additional level of veneration, an honor my three most recent successors reserved for only three others: Pope John Paul II, President Ronald Reagan, and General Colin Powell.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am proud to award the Presidential Medal of Freedom With Distinction to my brother, Joseph Robinette Biden, Jr.

Will the Aide please read the citation.

[*At this point, Lt. Cmdr. Ginny R. Nadolny, USCG, Coast Guard Aide to the President, read the citation, and the President presented the medal, assisted by Maj. Christopher J. Ross, USMC, Marine Corps Aide to the President.*]

Vice President Biden. Mr. President. Please, please, thank you. Thank you. Please. Thank you.

Ricchetti, you're fired. [*Laughter*] For the press, Ricchetti is my Chief of Staff. [*Laughter*]

I had no inkling. I thought we were coming over, Michelle, to—for you, Jill, and Barack and I and a couple of senior staff to toast one another and say what an incredible journey it's been.

Mr. President, you got right the part about my leaning on Jill. But I've also leaned on you and a lot of people in this room. I look around the room and I see great friends like Ted Kaufman, whose been of so much wisdom. Guys like Mel Monzack. I look around here and I'm startled. I keep seeing people I don't expect. Madam President, how are you? Mr. President, look at my new boss over there. [*Laughter*]

But you know, I get a lot of credit I don't deserve, to state the obvious, and—because I've always had somebody to lean on. From back that time in 1972, when the accident happened, I leaned on, and I mean this in a literal sense—Chris knows this, Dodd knows this, and Mel knows this, and Ted knows this—I leaned on my sons Beau and Hunter. And I continue to lean on Hunter, who continues to in a bizarre kind of way raise me. I mean, I've leaned on them.

And, Mr. President, you observed early on that when either one of my boys would walk in the room, they'd walk up and say: "Dad, what can I get you? Dad, what do you need?"

And then Jill came along, and she saved our life. She—no man deserves one great love, let alone two. And—but everybody knows here, I am Jill's husband. Everybody knows that I love her more than she loves me—[*laughter*]—with good reason. [*Laughter*] And she gave me the most precious gift, the love of my life, the life of my love, my daughter Ashley.

And I continue to lean on the family. President, you kidded me once. You heard that in the preparation for the two debates, Vice Presidential debates that I had—I only had two—that Beau and Hunt would be the last people in the room. And Beau would say: "Look at me, Dad. Look at me. Remember, remember home base. Remember."

So—and the Secret Service can tell you, Mr. President, that Beau and Hunt and Ashley continue to have to corral me. We were at one of the national parks, and I was climbing up on top of a bridge to jump off the bridge with a bunch of young kids. And I hear my sons yelling: "Dad, get down. Now!" [*Laughter*] And I just started laughing so hard I couldn't stop. And I said, "I was just going to do a flip—a full gainer—off here."

He said: "Dad, the Secret Service doesn't want you up there. Dad. Look at me, Dad." [*Laughter*] So we've never figured out who the father is in this family. [*Laughter*]

And, Mr. President, you know that with good reason there is no power in the Vice Presidency. Matter of fact, I just did for Nancy Pelosi's daughter a reading of the Constitution. You probably did one for her. And they had me read the provisions relating to the Vice Presidency in the Constitution. And there is no inherent power, nor should there be.

But, Mr. President, you have more than kept the—your commitment to me by saying that you wanted me to help govern. The President's line often—other people don't hear it that often—but when someone would say,

"Can you get Joe to do such and such?" he says, "I don't do his schedule, and he doesn't do mine."

Every single thing you've asked me to do, Mr. President, you have trusted me to do. And that is a—that's a remarkable thing. I don't think according to—I see the President of Georgetown here as well. I don't think according to the Presidential, Vice Presidential scholars that kind of relationship has existed. I mean, for real. And it's all you, Mr. President. It's all you.

The reason why when you send me around the world, nothing gets—as my mom would say, gets missed between the cup and the lip. It's because they know when I speak, I speak for you.

And it's been easy, Mr. President, because we not only have the same political philosophy and ideology. I tell everybody, and I've told them from the beginning. And I'm not saying this to reciprocate. I've never known a President and few people I've ever met my whole life—I can count on less than one hand—who have had the integrity and the decency and the sense of other people's needs like you do.

I know you were upset when I told the story about when Hunt and I were worried that Beau would have to—that he would, as a matter of honor, decide he had to step down as attorney general while he was fighting his battle because he had aphasia. He was losing his ability to speak, and he didn't want to ever be in a position where—to him everything was about duty and honor.

And I said: "And he may resign. I don't know, I just have the feeling he may." And Hunt and I had talked about this. And I said, "He doesn't have any other income, but we're all right, because Hunt's there, and I can sell the house." We were having a private lunch like we do once a week. And this man got up, came over, grabbed me by the shoulders, looked me in the eye, and said: "Don't you sell that house. You love that house." I said, "It's no big deal, Mr. President." He said: "I'll give you the money. We'll give you the money. Promise me, promise me, you won't sell that house."

I remember when Ashley, Mr. President, we were in the Oval, and Ashley was in an elevator, and the elevator plummeted to the—she was with a group of people—I don't know, just—I forget which building in Philadelphia, and it plummeted to the ground. And immediately, the Service was worried that she may have been badly hurt. And I got up to take the call, and you didn't let up until you made sure your Service followed through and made sure everything was all right.

But you know, Mr. President, we kid about both—about marrying up, we both did, that kind of thing. But the truth of the matter is—I said this to Michelle last night—Michelle is the finest First Lady in my view that has ever served in the office. There's been other great First Ladies, but I really genuinely mean it. And—[*applause*]—I mean it. I kid—[*applause*].

When I got to meet Michelle's brother, and he told me about how you guys were raised, and I got to know and love your mom, if your mom—were your mom 15 years older, she could have been my mom. I mean, literally, the way you were raised, the way we were raised; there wasn't any difference. And I knew that this decision to join you, which was the greatest honor of my life, was the right decision on the night we had to go and accept the nomination, the formal—we'd be nominated at the convention. And Finnegan, who is now 18 years old, was then 10 years old. And she came to me, and she said, "Pop, is it okay if the room that we're in"—Finnegan, Maisy, and Naomi—"that we have the beds taken out?" And I said, "Why?" She said, maybe the Obama girls and your brother's children, maybe they would come down, all sleep together in sleeping bags. [*Laughter*] And I give you my word as a Biden, I knew when I left to go to the convention, open that door, and saw them cuddled together—[*laughter*]—I knew this was the right decision. I knew it was the right decision. I really did. Because, Mr. President, the same value set. The same value set.

Folks, you know, I joke with my staff that I don't know why they pay them anything, because they get to advise me. [*Laughter*] Let me explain what I mean by that. As the President

of the University of Delaware, where my heart resides, and my home campus of Delaware, as he can tell you, it's—I get to give you advice. I get to be the last guy in the room and give you advice on the most difficult decisions anyone has to make in the whole world. But I get to walk out, and you make it all by yourself. All by yourself.

Harry Truman was right about the buck stopping at the desk. And I've never, never, never, never, never, never once doubted on these life-and-death decisions. I never once doubted that your judgment was flawed—not once. Not once.

And we've disagreed, and we've argued, and we've raised our voices with one another, which—we made a deal we'd be completely open like brothers with one another. But, Mr. President, I've watched you under intense fire. I will venture to say that no President in history has had as many novel crises land on his desk in all of history. The Civil War was worse, the World War II was worse, World War I, but, Mr. President, almost every one of the crises you faced was a case of first instance. A case of first instance. And I watched that prodigious mind and that heart as big as your head—I've watched you. I've watched how you've acted.

When you see a woman or man under intense pressure, you get a measure, and you know that, Michelle, and your daughters know it as well. This is a remarkable man. And I just hope that the asterisk in history that is attached to my name when they talk about this Presidency is that I can say I was part of the journey of a remarkable man who did remarkable things for this country. Remarkable things.

The President. This is supposed to be for you.

Vice President Biden. Thank you!

You know, I can't let a comment go by without quoting an Irish poet. [*Laughter*] Jill and I talk about why you were able to develop the way you developed and with the heart you have. Michelle and I have talked about it. I've confided in Michelle. I've gone to her for advice. I've—we've talked about this man. You give me insight. And I think it's because, Mr. President—you gave me credit for having—understanding other people's misery and suffering. Well, Mr. President, there is not one single, solitary ounce of entitlement in you or Michelle or your beautiful daughters. And you, girls, are incredible. You really are. That's not hyperbole, you really are. Not one ounce of entitlement.

And Seamus Heaney, in one of his poems, said—[*laughter*].

The President. Like I said.

Vice President Biden. When you can find someone who says it better, use it. [*Laughter*] He said, "You carried your own burden and very soon, your symptoms of creeping privilege disappeared." You carried your own burdens, and very soon, the creeping symptoms of privilege disappeared.

Mr. President, you have sometimes been like a lone wolf, but you carried yourself in a way that's pretty remarkable. The history of the journey—your journey—is something people are going to write about a long time, and I'm not being solicitous when I say this. And you're so fortunate, both of you, to have found each other, because all that grounding, all that you have, made this guy totally whole. And it's pretty amazing.

Mr. President, this honor is not only well beyond what I deserve, but it's a reflection on the extent and generosity of your spirit. I don't deserve this, but I know it came from the President's heart. There is a Talmudic saying that says, what comes from the heart, enters the heart. Mr. President, you have creeped into our heart—you and your whole family, including Mom—and you occupy it. It's an amazing thing that happened. I knew how smart you were. I knew how honorable you were. I knew how decent you were from the couple years we worked in the Senate, and I knew what you were capable of. But I never fully expected that you'd occupy the Bidens' heart, from Hunter to Ashley, my sister, all of us. All of us.

And, Mr. President, I'm indebted to you. I'm indebted to your friendship. I'm indebted to your family. And as I'll tell you—I'll end on a humorous note. We're having lunch—lunches, and mostly, it's what's ever in either one of our minds. We'll talk about family an awful lot.

And about 6 months in, President looks at me, he said: "You know, Joe, you know what surprised me? How we've become such good friends." [*Laughter*] And I said, "Surprised you?" [*Laughter*]

But that is candid Obama—[*laughter*]—and it's real. And, Mr. President, you know as long as there's a breath in me, I'll be there for you, my whole family will be, and I know, I know it is reciprocal. I—and I want to thank you all so very, very, very much, all of you, for being here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:50 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to musician Stefani J.A. "Lady Gaga" Germanotta; Pope Francis; Sen. Lindsey O. Graham; and former Secretary of State Colin L. Powell. Vice President Biden referred to former Sens. Edward E. "Ted" Kaufman and Christopher J. Dodd; Melvyn I. Monzack, managing partner, Monzack Mersky McLaughlin and Browder, P.A.; Amy Gutmann, president, University of Pennsylvania; Sen. Christopher A. Coons; Christine P. Pelosi, chair of the women's caucus, California Democratic Party; John J. DeGioia, president, Georgetown University; the President's mother-in-law Marian Robinson and brother-in-law Craig M. Robinson and his children Avery and Leslie; and Dennis Assanis, president, University of Delaware. He also referred to his sister Valerie Biden Owens. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the reading of the citation.

Statement on the United States Trade Enforcement Action Against China and the Administration's Trade Enforcement Record
January 12, 2017

America succeeds when our workers and businesses have a fair shot to compete in the global economy. That's why when other countries cut corners and break the rules on trade, my administration stands up for strong trade enforcement. In fact, since taking office, we've overhauled our trade enforcement efforts and dedicated significant new resources to holding our trading partners accountable. We've filed more enforcement complaints in the World Trade Organization (WTO) than any other WTO member, and we've won every one of those challenges that's been decided. Today we're building on our support for American workers and businesses by filing our latest complaint with the WTO against China's trade practices.

China gives its aluminum industry an unfair advantage through underpriced loans and other illegal Government subsidies. These kinds of policies have disadvantaged American manufacturers and contributed to the global glut in aluminum, steel, and other sectors. We're taking action to protect the workers—at home and around the world—who are hurt everyday by these policies. That's what we've done since day one. From enhancing fair trade laws and expanding enforcement resources to preventing unfair currency practices and safeguarding intellectual property, our record of forceful and effective trade enforcement on behalf of American businesses and workers has protected American jobs. It's simple: When the playing field is level, American workers win.

Statement on the Cuban Immigration Policy of the United States
January 12, 2017

Today the United States is taking important steps forward to normalize relations with Cuba and to bring greater consistency to our immigration policy. The Department of Homeland Security is ending the so-called "wet-foot/dry-foot" policy, which was put in place more than 20 years ago and was designed for a different era. Effective immediately, Cuban nationals

who attempt to enter the United States illegally and do not qualify for humanitarian relief will be subject to removal, consistent with U.S. law and enforcement priorities. By taking this step, we are treating Cuban migrants the same way we treat migrants from other countries. The Cuban Government has agreed to accept the return of Cuban nationals who have been ordered removed, just as it has been accepting the return of migrants interdicted at sea.

Today the Department of Homeland Security is also ending the Cuban Medical Professional Parole Program. The United States and Cuba are working together to combat diseases that endanger the health and lives of our people. By providing preferential treatment to Cuban medical personnel, the medical parole program contradicts those efforts and risks harming the Cuban people. Cuban medical personnel will now be eligible to apply for asylum at U.S. Embassies and consulates around the world, consistent with the procedures for all foreign nationals.

The United States, a land of immigrants, has been enriched by the contributions of Cuban Americans for more than a century. Since I took office, we have put the Cuban American community at the center of our policies. With this change we will continue to welcome Cubans, as we welcome immigrants from other nations, consistent with our laws. During my administration, we worked to improve the lives of the Cuban people—inside of Cuba—by providing them with greater access to resources, information, and connectivity to the wider world. Sustaining that approach is the best way to ensure that Cubans can enjoy prosperity, pursue reforms, and determine their own destiny. As I said in Havana, the future of Cuba should be in the hands of the Cuban people.

Statement on the Designation of National Monuments Honoring Civil Rights History and on the Expansion of National Monuments in Oregon and California

January 12, 2017

Today I am designating new national monuments that preserve critical chapters of our country's history, from the Civil War to the civil rights movement. These monuments preserve the vibrant history of the Reconstruction Era and its role in redefining freedom. They tell the important stories of the citizens who helped launch the civil rights movement in Birmingham and the Freedom Riders whose bravery raised national awareness of segregation and violence. These stories are part of our shared history. From designating Stonewall National Monument, our country's first national monument honoring the LGBT movement, to recognizing the movement for women's equality through the Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument, I have sought to build a more inclusive National Park System and ensure that our national parks, monuments, and public lands are fully reflective of our Nation's diverse history and culture.

I am also expanding existing areas for some of our country's treasured and historic natural resources in Oregon and California today, including stretches of California's scenic coast and unique wildlife habitat in rugged mountain ranges and forests in Oregon and California. Over the last 8 years, I have sought to work with local communities, Tribal governments, businesses, sportsmen, Members of Congress, and others to protect the most important public lands for the benefit of future generations. Today's actions will help ensure that more of our country's history will be preserved and celebrated and that more of our outdoors will be protected for all to experience and enjoy.

NOTE: The statement referred to Proclamations 9563, 9564, 9565, 9566, and 9567, which are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Recognizing Positive Actions by the Government of Sudan and Providing for the Revocation of Certain Sudan-Related Sanctions

January 13, 2017

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with subsection 204(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(b), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the "order") that revokes sections 1 and 2 of Executive Order 13067 of November 3, 1997, and revokes Executive Order 13412 of October 13, 2006, in its entirety. Both actions are effective 180 days from January 13, 2017, provided that certain further action is taken by the Secretary of State on or before that date. I have determined that the situation that gave rise to the actions taken in those orders related to the policies and actions of the Government of Sudan has been altered by Sudan's positive actions over the past 6 months. These actions include a marked reduction in offensive military activity, culminating in a pledge to maintain a cessation of hostilities in conflict areas in Sudan, and steps toward the improvement of humanitarian access throughout Sudan, as well as cooperation with the United States on addressing regional conflicts and the threat of terrorism.

The President issued Executive Order 13067 to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the actions and policies of the Government of Sudan, including support for international terrorism; efforts to destabilize neighboring governments; and the prevalence of human rights violations. Section 1 of Executive Order 13067 blocks the property and interests in property of the Government of Sudan, and section 2 prohibits a broad range of trade and investment-related transactions with Sudan, including imports from and exports to Sudan. The President expanded the scope of the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13067 in Executive Order 13400 of April 26, 2006, which blocks the property and interests in property of certain persons in connection with the conflict in Darfur. The President took additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13067 in Executive Order 13412 due to policies and actions of the Government of Sudan that violated human rights, in particular with respect to the conflict in Darfur, and the pervasive role played by the Government of Sudan in the petroleum and petrochemical industries in Sudan. Executive Order 13412 continues the blocking of the Government of Sudan, specifies new prohibitions relating to Sudan's petroleum industry, and exempts certain specified areas in Sudan from the trade prohibitions found in Executive Order 13067.

With the positive steps taken by the Government of Sudan over the last 6 months, and provided that these positive actions are sustained over the next 180 days, there will be no further need for sections 1 and 2 of Executive Order 13067 or for Executive Order 13412. The 180-day delay period of the order's effective date with respect to removing these provisions is intended to encourage the Government of Sudan to sustain its efforts in these areas. The order directs the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury, the Director of National Intelligence, and the Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, and based on a consideration of relevant and credible information from available sources, including nongovernmental organizations, on or before July 12, 2017, to provide a report to the President on the Government of Sudan's progress in sustaining the positive actions taken by the Government of Sudan that gave rise to the order, including carrying out the Government of Sudan's pledge to maintain a cessation of hostilities in conflict areas in Sudan; continuing improvement of humanitarian access throughout Sudan; and maintaining its cooperation with the United States on addressing regional conflicts and the threat of terrorism. As much of the

report as possible shall be unclassified and made public. Provided that the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury, the Director of National Intelligence, and the Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, publishes on or before July 12, 2017, a notice in the *Federal Register* stating that the Government of Sudan has sustained the positive actions that gave rise to the order and has provided to the President the report described above, the revocation of sections 1 and 2 of Executive Order 13067 and the revocation of Executive Order 13412 will become effective. The national emergency the President declared in Executive Order 13067 will remain in place, as will Executive Order 13400.

The order further directs the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury, the Director of National Intelligence, and the Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, to provide to the President an updated version of the report described above annually thereafter and, concurrent with those reports, to publish in the *Federal Register* a notice stating whether the Government of Sudan has sustained the positive actions that gave rise to the order. As much of the annual reports as possible shall be unclassified and made public. In addition, to the extent an annual report concludes that the Government of Sudan has or has not sustained the positive actions that gave rise to the order, the order directs the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury, the Director of National Intelligence, and the Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, to provide to the President recommendations on appropriate U.S. Government responses.

For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to revoke sections 1 and 2 of Executive Order 13067 and to revoke Executive Order 13412 on July 12, 2017, provided that further action is taken by the Secretary of State, as set forth in the order. Consistent with this determination, I have waived in the order the application of section 908(a)(1) of the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7201–7211) with respect to Sudan, and sections 6(a) and (b) of the Comprehensive Peace in Sudan Act of 2004, as amended (Public Law 108–497).

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued. The order is effective on January 13, 2017, except for sections 1, 4, 5, 6, and 7 of the order, which are effective on July 12, 2017, provided that further action is taken by the Secretary of State as set forth in the order.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Cuba and of the Emergency Authority Relating to the Regulation of the Anchorage and Movement of Vessels
January 13, 2017

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to Cuba that was declared on March 1, 1996, in Proclamation 6867, as amended by Proclamation 7757 on February

26, 2004, and Proclamation 9398 on February 25, 2016, is to continue in effect beyond February 25, 2017.

It continues to be U.S. policy that a mass migration from Cuba would endanger the security of the United States by posing a disturbance or threatened disturbance of the international relations of the United States. The unauthorized entry of vessels subject to the jurisdiction of the United States into Cuban territorial waters is in violation of U.S. law and contrary to U.S. policy. Further, the unauthorized entry of U.S.-registered vessels into Cuban territorial waters continues to be detrimental to U.S. foreign policy and counter to the purpose of Executive Order 12807, which is to ensure, among other things, safe, orderly, and legal migration. The possibility of large-scale unauthorized entries of U.S.-registered vessels would disturb the international relations of the United States by facilitating a possible mass migration of Cuban nationals. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to Cuba and the emergency authority relating to the regulation of the anchorage and movement of vessels set out in Proclamation 6867 as amended by Proclamation 7757 and as further modified by Proclamation 9398.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Iran
January 13, 2017

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared on March 15, 1995, is to continue in effect beyond March 15, 2017.

On July 14, 2015, the P5+1 (China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States), the European Union, and Iran reached a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to ensure that Iran's nuclear program is and will remain exclusively peaceful. January 16, 2016, marked Implementation Day under the JCPOA, when the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) issued a report verifying that Iran had completed key nuclear-related steps as specified in the JCPOA, and the Secretary of State confirmed the report's findings. As a result, the United States lifted nuclear-related sanctions on Iran consistent with its commitments under the JCPOA, including the termination of a number of Executive Orders that were issued pursuant to this national emergency. While nuclear-related sanctions were lifted pursuant to our JCPOA commitments, a number of non-nuclear sanctions with respect to Iran remain in place.

Since Implementation Day, the IAEA has repeatedly verified, and the Secretary of State has confirmed, that Iran continues to meet its nuclear commitments pursuant to the JCPOA. Nevertheless, certain actions and policies of the Government of Iran are contrary to the interests of the United States in the region and continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the

United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to Iran and to maintain in force comprehensive sanctions against Iran to respond to this threat.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Libya
January 13, 2017

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13566 of February 25, 2011, with respect to Libya is to continue in effect beyond February 25, 2017.

Colonel Muammar Qadhafi, his government, and close associates took extreme measures against the people of Libya, including by using weapons of war, mercenaries, and wanton violence against unarmed civilians. In addition, there was a serious risk that Libyan state assets would be misappropriated by Qadhafi, members of his government, members of his family, or his close associates if those assets were not protected. The foregoing circumstances, the prolonged attacks, and the increased numbers of Libyans seeking refuge in other countries caused a deterioration in the security of Libya, posed a serious risk to its stability, and led me to declare a national emergency to deal with this threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States.

The Government of National Accord (GNA), which was established through the Libyan-led and U.N.-facilitated Libyan Political Dialogue, has sought to bolster its support in Libya but continues to face obstacles from spoilers and hardliners. The House of Representatives in eastern Libya, which the Libyan Political Agreement (LPA) stipulates should function as the GNA's legislature, continues its attempts to compete with, rather than work with, the GNA. GNA-aligned forces, backed by air strikes and intelligence support from the U.S. military, successfully ousted the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) from Sirte; however, ISIL and other terrorist groups continue to pose a threat to Libyan stability as well as U.S. and allied interests outside Libya. Recent clashes between militias highlight the continued threat of violence in Libya and the potential for renewed fighting over the country's resources, and we run the risk of further destabilization if sanctions do not remain in effect.

We continue to encourage all Libyans to engage in dialogue and cease violence. Those that reject dialogue and obstruct and undermine Libya's democratic transition must be held accountable, which is why we worked with the U.N. Security Council to pass United Nations Security Council Resolution 2174 in August 2014 to address threats to Libya's peace, security, and stability. In December 2015, we also worked with the U.N. Security Council to pass United Nations Security Council Resolution 2259 in order to welcome the signing of the LPA and to demonstrate international support for Libya's political transition process. We will continue to work with the international community to identify those individuals that pose a

threat to Libya's democratic transition and ensure that the appropriate sanctions remain in place.

The situation in Libya continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States, and we need to protect against the diversion of assets or other abuse by certain members of Qadhafi's family and other former regime officials. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency with respect to Libya.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process

January 13, 2017

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared with respect to foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process is to continue in effect beyond January 23, 2017.

The crisis with respect to grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process that led to the declaration of a national emergency on January 23, 1995, has not been resolved. Terrorist groups continue to engage in activities that have the purpose or effect of threatening the Middle East peace process that are hostile to United States interests in the region. Such actions continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process and to maintain in force the sanctions against them to respond to this threat.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Ukraine

January 13, 2017

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary

date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 of March 6, 2014, is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2017.

The actions and policies of persons that undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets, as well as the actions and policies of the Government of the Russian Federation, including its purported annexation of Crimea and its use of force in Ukraine, continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. Therefore, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 with respect to Ukraine.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Venezuela
January 13, 2017

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13692 of March 8, 2015, with respect to the situation in Venezuela is to continue in effect beyond March 8, 2017.

The situation in Venezuela described in Executive Order 13692 has not improved, including the Government of Venezuela's erosion of human rights guarantees, persecution of political opponents, curtailment of press freedoms, use of violence and human rights violations and abuses in response to antigovernment protests, and arbitrary arrest and detention of antigovernment protestors, as well as the exacerbating presence of significant government corruption. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13692 with respect to the situation in Venezuela.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Zimbabwe
January 13, 2017

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003, with respect to the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2017.

The crisis constituted by the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions has not been resolved. These actions and policies continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue this national emergency and to maintain in force the sanctions to respond to this threat.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Designation of Rhonda Schnare Schmidtlein as Chair of the United States International Trade Commission
January 13, 2017

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with the provisions of 19 U.S.C. 1330(c)(1), this is to notify the Congress that I have designated Rhonda Schnare Schmidtlein as Chair of the United States International Trade Commission for the term expiring June 16, 2018.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

The President's Weekly Address
January 14, 2017

This week, I traveled to Chicago to deliver my final, Farewell Address to the Nation, following in the tradition of Presidents before me. It was an opportunity to say thank you. Whether we've seen eye to eye or rarely agreed at all, my conversations with you, the American people—in living rooms and schools, at farms and on factory floors, at diners and on distant military outposts—all these conversations are what have kept me honest, kept me inspired, and kept me going. Every day, I learned from you. You made me a better President, and you made me a better man.

Over the course of these 8 years, I've seen the goodness, the resilience, and the hope of the American people. I've seen neighbors looking out for each other as we rescued our economy from the worst crisis of our lifetimes. I've hugged cancer survivors who finally know the security of affordable health care. I've seen communities like Joplin rebuild from disaster and cities like Boston show the world that no terrorist will ever break the American spirit.

I've seen the hopeful faces of young graduates and our newest military officers. I've mourned with grieving families searching for answers, and I found grace in a Charleston church. I've seen our scientists help a paralyzed man regain his sense of touch and our wounded warriors walk again. I've seen our doctors and volunteers rebuild after earthquakes and stop pandemics in their tracks. I've learned from students who are building robots and curing diseases and who will change the world in ways we can't even imagine. I've seen the youngest of children remind us of our obligations to care for our refugees, to work in peace, and above all, to look out for each other.

That's what's possible when we come together in the slow, hard, sometimes frustrating, but always vital work of self-government. But we can't take our democracy for granted. All of us, regardless of party, should throw ourselves into the work of citizenship. Not just when there's an election, not just when our own narrow interest is at stake, but over the full span of a lifetime. If you're tired of arguing with strangers on the Internet, try to talk with one in real life. If something needs fixing, lace up your shoes and do some organizing. If you're disappointed by your elected officials, then grab a clipboard, get some signatures, and run for office yourself.

Our success depends on our participation, regardless of which way the pendulum of power swings. It falls on each of us to be guardians of our democracy, to embrace the joyous task we've been given to continually try to improve this great Nation of ours. Because for all our outward differences, we all share the same proud title: citizen.

It has been the honor of my life to serve you as President. Eight years later, I am even more optimistic about our country's promise. And I look forward to working along your side, as a citizen, for all my days that remain.

Thanks, everybody. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 2:45 p.m. on January 13 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast on January 14. In the address, the President referred to Dunbar, PA, resident Nathan Copeland, a patient at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center in Pittsburgh, PA. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 13, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on January 14.

Remarks Honoring the 2016 World Series Champion Chicago Cubs
January 16, 2017

The President. They said this day would never come. [*Laughter*] Here is something none of my predecessors ever got a chance to say: Welcome to the White House the World Series Champion Chicago Cubs!

Now, I know you guys would prefer to stand the whole time, but sit down. [*Laughter*]

I will say to the Cubs: It took you long enough. I mean, I've only got 4 days left. You're just making it under the wire. [*Laughter*]

Now, listen, I made a lot of promises in 2008. [*Laughter*] We've managed to fulfill a large number of them. But even I was not crazy enough to suggest that during these 8 years we would see the Cubs win the World Series. But I did say that there's never been anything false about hope. [*Laughter*] Hope, the audacity of hope.

Audience member. Yes, we can!

The President. Yes, we can.

Audience members. Yes, we did!

Audience member. Yes, we will!

The President. Now, listen, for those of you from Chicago who have known me a long time,

it is no secret that there's a certain South Side team that has my loyalty. [*Laughter*] For me, the drought hasn't been that—as long. We had the '85 Bears; we had the Bulls' run in the nineties. I've hosted the Blackhawks a number of times. The White Sox did win just 11 years ago with Ozzie and Konerko and Buehrle. So I can't claim that I have the same just visceral joy of some in this White House. [*Laughter*]

But FLOTUS is a lifelong Cubs fan. And I will tell you, she had to go to another event, but in the 8 years that I've been here—I told the team this—in the 8 years that I've been here, we've hosted at least 50 teams: football, basketball, baseball, soccer, you name it. Michelle has never come to a single event celebrating a champion until today. And she came and shook hands and met with every one of these members of the Cubs organization and told a story about what it meant for her to be able to see them win, because she remembers coming home from school, and her dad would be watching a Cubs game, and the bond and the family, the meaning that the Cubs had for her in terms of connecting with her father and why it meant so much for her. And I almost choked up listening to it. And it spoke, I think, to how people feel about this organization, and that it's been passed on generation after generation, and it's more than just sports.

And that is not just true for FLOTUS. My longest serving aide, Anita, is a Cubs fan. [*Laughter*] "Fan" is not enough. When they won, the next day she said, "This is the best day of my life." [*Laughter*] And I said: "What about me winning the Presidency? What about your wedding day?" She's, like, "No, this is the best." My chief speechwriter, Cody Keenan—[*applause*]—Cubs fan. In fact, there were a lot of sick days during the playoffs. [*Laughter*] One of my staff members was caught being interviewed at a bar outside of Wrigley—[*laughter*]—and we're watching him being interviewed. You remember, Luke? And he's looking kind of sheepish about it. It's, like, why aren't you in the office? [*Laughter*]

But look, the truth is, there was a reason not just that people felt good about the Cubs winning. There was something about this particular Cubs team winning that people felt good about. For example, David Ross and I have something in common: We've both been on a "year-long retirement party." [*Laughter*] But unlike "Grandpa," my team has not yet bought me a scooter with a motorized golf caddy. But there are 4 days left. Maybe I'll get that. [*Laughter*]

The last time the Cubs won the World Series, Teddy Roosevelt was President. Albert Einstein and—or was it Thomas Edison—was still alive. The first Cubs radio broadcast wouldn't be for almost two decades. We've been through World Wars, cold war, a depression, space race, all manner of social and technological change. But during that time, those decades were also marked by Phil Cavarretta and Ernie Banks; Billy Williams, who's here today; Ron Santo, Ferg, Ryne Sandberg, Dawson, Maddux, Grace. Those decades were punctuated by Lee Elia's rants and Harry Caray's exuberance: "Hey, Hey" and "Holy Cow" and capped off by "Go Cubs Go." [*Laughter*]

So the first thing that made this championship so special for so many is, is that the Cubs know what it's like to be loyal and to persevere and to hope and to suffer and then keep on hoping. And it's a generational thing. That's what you heard Michelle describing. People all across the city remember the first time a parent took them to Wrigley or memories of climbing in their dad's lap to watch games on WGN—and that's part of the reason, by the way, why Michelle had invited—made sure that José Cardenal was here, because that was her favorite player. And she was describing, back then, he had a big afro, and she was describing how she used to wear her hat over her afro the same way José did.

You could see all that love this season in the fans who traveled to their dads' gravesites to listen to games on the radio, who wore their moms' old jerseys to games, who covered the brick walls of Wrigley with love notes in chalk to departed fans whose lifelong faith was finally fulfilled.

None of this, of course, would have happened without the extraordinary contributions of the Ricketts family. Tom met his wife Cece in the bleachers of Wrigley about 30 years ago,

which is about 30 years longer than most of relationships that begin there last. [*Laughter*] Just saying. [*Laughter*] Our dear friend Laura Ricketts met her wife Brooke in the ballpark as well.

Brothers and sisters, they turned this team around by hiring what has to be one of the greatest, if not—I mean, he's still pretty young, so we'll see how long he keeps on going—the greatest general managers of all time, Theo Epstein—[*applause*]—and along with Jed Hoyer and Jason McLeod. They did just an unbelievable job. Theo, as you know—his job is to quench droughts: 86 years in Boston, 108 in Chicago. He takes the reins of an organization that's wandering in the wilderness, he delivers them to the Promised Land. [*Laughter*] I've talked to him about being DNC chair. [*Laughter*] But he's decided wisely to stick to baseball.

That brings me to the other thing that was so special about this championship, and that's just the guys behind me, the team. They steamrolled the majors this year with a 103-win record. All you had to know about this team was encapsulated in that one moment in Game 5, down 3 games to 1, do or die, in front of the home fans, when David Ross and Jon Lester turned to each other and said, "I love you, man." And he said, "I love you too." [*Laughter*] It was sort of like an Obama-Biden moment right there. [*Laughter*]

And then you've got the manager, Joe Maddon, who—[*applause*]—let's face it, there are not a lot of coaches or managers who are as cool as this guy. Look how he looks right now. [*Laughter*] That's cool. That's cool. He used costume parties and his "Shaggin' Wagon." [*Laughter*] So he's got—I'm just saying—he's got a lot of tricks to motivate. But he's also a master of tactics and makes the right move at the right time: when to pinch hit, when to pinch run, when to make it rain—[*laughter*]—in Game 7 of the World Series. That was—it was masterful. So he set the tone, but also some of the amazing players here set the tone.

My fellow "44"—Anthony Rizzo, who—the heart of this team. Five years ago, he was a part of the squad that lost 101 games. He stuck at it and led the National League in All-Star votes this year.

His business partner in the "Bryzzo Souvenir Company," which delivers baseballs to fans in all parts of the bleachers: Kris Bryant. Now—where's Kris? This guy had a good year. [*Laughter*] You go from Rookie of the Year to being the MVP. You win the World Series. And then, like me, he marries up and comes to the White House. And he did all this just in 10 days. [*Laughter*] I mean, it took me a long time. So congratulations to the newlyweds, Jessica and Kris Bryant.

And then you've got these young guys like Báez and Russell: Báez turning tagging into an art form; Russell becoming the youngest player to hit a World Series Grand Slam since Mickey Mantle. And you mix these amazing young talents with somebody like David Ross who, for example, helped Anthony out of his "glass case of emotions" in Game 7. [*Laughter*] But think about what Rossie did in his final season: caught a no-hitter, surpassed a hundred home runs for his career, including one in his last game ever. If there was ever a way to go out, this was it.

And then you've got Ben Zobrist, who didn't get to come to the White House last year after winning it all with the Royals, but then hits .357 in the World Series, go-ahead RBI in the 10th inning of the Game 7, World Series MVP. I think he's earned his way here. So—[*applause*]. Hey! And is apparently a good guy, because I asked his wife—she was in line before he was—and I said, has he gotten a big head since he got the whole MVP thing? "No, he's so sweet, he's so humble." [*Inaudible*] You owe her dinner tonight. [*Laughter*]

Extraordinary pitching staff, including Kyle Hendricks, the first Cub to lead the majors in ERA since 1938. Kyle, in turn, was the only pitcher this year with a better ERA than Jon Lester, who racked up 19 wins. Good job. Jake Arrieta, 2015 Cy Young Award winner, stretched a 20-game win streak featuring two no-hitters across the past two seasons, then hit a home run in the NLDS, and won two games in the World Series. So, apparently, Pilates works. [*Laughter*] Michelle says it does.

So—and then, finally, the game itself and the series itself. To come back from a 3-1 deficit against a great Cleveland Indians team forced what is widely considered the Game 7 of all time. Dexter Fowler becomes the first player to hit a leadoff home run in Game 7. Javy Báez hits another leadoff the fifth. David Ross becomes the older player—oldest player to knock one out in a Game 7 as well. Kyle Schwarber, who's been hurt and hobbled, then suddenly, he comes in and gets seven hits in the Series, three in Game 7 alone.

And then you've got the 10th inning, you've got the rain. [*Laughter*] God finally feeling mercy on Cubs fans. [*Laughter*] An entire game, an entire season, an entire century of hope and heartbreak all coming down to a one-inning sprint. And then Zobrist knocked in one, Montero knocked in another. Carl Edwards, Jr., and Mike Montgomery teamed up to shut the Indians down.

And then, at 12:47 a.m. Eastern Time, Bryant—it looks like he's going to slip; everybody is getting a little stressed—tosses a grounder to Rizzo. Rizzo gets the ball, slips it in his back pocket—[*laughter*]—which shows excellent situational awareness. [*Laughter*] That was impressive. And suddenly, everything is changed. No more black cats, billy goats, ghosts, flubbed grounders. The Chicago Cubs are the champs. And on ESPN, you've got Van Pelt saying, "One of the alltime great nights." You've got Tim Kurkjian calling it "the greatest night of baseball in the history of the game." Two days later, millions of people—the largest gathering of Americans that I know of—in Chicago. And for a moment, our hometown becomes the very definition of joy. So, in Chicago, I think it's fair to say, you guys will be popular for a while. [*Laughter*]

But, in addition, they're also doing a lot of good work. Anthony Rizzo and Jon Lester raised money to help others beat cancer like they did. Under the Ricketts family's leadership, last year alone, Cubs Charities supported charitable grants and donations of nearly $4 million that reached nearly 120,000 children and young adults across Chicagoland. Under their "Let's Give" initiative, Cubs staff, coaches, players, and spouses donated more than 1,500 hours of service last year to the community. And after their visit here today, they will head to Walter Reed to visit with some of our brave wounded warriors.

So, just to wrap up, today is, I think, our last official event—isn't it?—at the White House under my Presidency. And it also happens to be a day that we celebrate one of the great Americans of all time, Martin Luther King, Jr. And later, as soon as we're done here, Michelle and I are going to go over and do a service project, which is what we do every year to honor Dr. King. And it is worth remembering—because sometimes, people wonder, well why are you spending time on sports; there's other stuff going on—that throughout our history, sports has had this power to bring us together, even when the country is divided. Sports has changed attitudes and culture in ways that seem subtle, but that ultimately made us think differently about ourselves and who we were. It is a game, and it is celebration, but there's a direct line between Jackie Robinson and me standing here. There's a direct line between people loving Ernie Banks and then the city being able to come together and work together in one spirit.

And I was in my hometown of Chicago on Tuesday, for my Farewell Address, and I said, sometimes, it's not enough just to change the laws, you've got to change hearts. And sports has a way, sometimes, of changing hearts in a way that politics or business doesn't. And sometimes, it's just a matter of us being able to escape and relax from the difficulties of our days, but sometimes, it also speaks to something better in us. And when you see this group of folks of different shades and different backgrounds and coming from different communities and neighborhoods all across the country and then playing as one team and playing the right way and celebrating each other and being joyous in that, that tells us a little something about what America is and what America can be.

So it is entirely appropriate that we celebrate the Cubs today, here in this White House, on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday because it helps direct us in terms of what

this country has been and what it can be in the future.

With that, one more time, let's congratulate the 2016 World Championship Chicago Cubs! Good job! [*Applause*] Good job!

President of Baseball Operations Theo N. Epstein. Talk about a tough act to follow. Thank you, Mr. President, and thank you for inviting us. We're all honored to be here today, and we appreciate you taking the time on such an important day, Martin Luther King Day, and during such an historic week, the last week of your distinguished Presidency.

I was told on my way in here—actually, by our club historian—it's actually not the first time this franchise has visited the White House. It was 1888. [*Laughter*] And we were known as the Chicago White Stockings, and we stopped in here to visit President Grover Cleveland. And apparently, the team demanded to—for a proclamation to be named the best baseball team in the country. The President refused, and the team went on their way. [*Laughter*] And so here we are; we're going to make no such demands today. [*Laughter*] But we appreciate those kind words.

The President was so kind to recognize our three Hall-of-Famers here with us today who are so synonymous with what it means to be a Cub: Billy Williams, Fergie Jenkins, Ryne Sandberg. [*Applause*] Thank you for being here. And of course, José Cardenal, who got the longest hug from the First Lady we've ever seen, her favorite player of all time, you're the MVP today. [*Laughter*]

And I want to, one more time, recognize all of the Ricketts family who are here today. Tom, who's been such an ideal leader for our organization. Laura, who's been such a strong supporter of this President. And, Todd, who will embark on his journey in public service with a significant role in the new administration next week. And, Pete, who's busy governing Nebraska, couldn't be here, but sends his best. [*Laughter*]

Finally, we'd like to recognize all of our wives and significant others who do so much to support us behind the scenes, our great front office, who have worked so hard—[*inaudible*].

So, Mr. President, as you alluded to, in Cleveland on November 2 and into the early morning of November 3, this special group of players behind me, in one of the greatest World Series games in history, ended the longest championship drought in American sports. And when Kris Bryant's throw settled into Anthony Rizzo's glove for the final out of Game 7, the victory brought pride, joy, relief, and redemption to Cub fans everywhere, including many in the White House. [*Applause*] Thank you.

So many of you were there, but the city of Chicago erupted, unified into celebration that continues to this day. It was a thrilling, emotional time, and we think we even saw some White Sox fans smiling—[*laughter*]—which, Mr. President, brings us to you.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Epstein. We know you may have a certain allegiances to another team on the other side of town, but we know you're a very proud Chicagoan, and we know your better, wiser half, the First Lady—[*laughter*]—has been a lifelong and very loyal Cub fan, which we appreciate very much. And of course, we have great faith in your intelligence, your common sense, your pragmatism, your ability to recognize a good thing when you see one. [*Laughter*]

So, Mr. President, with only a few days remaining in your tremendous Presidency, we have taken the liberty here today of offering you a midnight pardon—[*laughter*]—for all your indiscretions as a baseball fan. And so we welcome you with open arms today into the Cubs family.

To recognize this terrific conversion and this great day, we have some gifts for you and your family. First, Anthony. Anthony Rizzo has graciously agreed to share his number 44 with "the 44."

The President. There we go!

Mr. Epstein. And if you're still not comfortable putting a Cubs jersey on, this one just says Chicago, so you're good with that one.

The President. All right. Thank you so much. I appreciate it.

Mr. Epstein. Second, we have—at historic Wrigley Field, we have a centerfield score-

board that's actually a historic landmark, and so we hope the National Park Service won't mind, but we took down a tile for you, number 44, which—[*applause*].

The President. That I like.

Mr. Epstein. Very few people have one of those.

The President. I know. That's very cool.

Mr. Epstein. We also wanted you to know that, as a new fan, you have a lot—you have some catching up to do. [*Laughter*] And you've been busy the last 8 years, and your family as well, so Laura Ricketts is here to present you with a lifetime pass to Wrigley Field for you and your family.

The President. Nice! I love how it says, "Nontransferable." [*Laughter*]

Mr. Epstein. Yes. It's strictly—it's just an emolument.

The President. Can you imagine if somebody walks up and is, like—[*laughter*].

Co-owner and member of the Board of Directors Laura Ricketts. You don't have to bring it with you.

Mr. Epstein. And finally, every time we win a game in Chicago, we fly the "W" flag, as you know. So we brought one for you, signed by the entire team, and we'd love for you to fly it at your new library, which we plan to do our very best to support.

The President. We will do so. Thank you so much. Look at that. This is some nice swag. I'm telling you. Thank you so much. This is great.

Former pitcher Ferguson Jenkins. You've got to get him to put the uniform on. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Epstein. It's just day one. It's just day one.

The President. Fergie, we're doing okay so far. [*Laughter*] Let's not get carried away.

Mr. Epstein. So, Mr. President, thank you for the dignity and integrity with which you've served this country for the last 8 years, for your tremendous service to Chicago and Illinois before that and for hosting us here today. We wish you all the best and look forward to seeing you on Wrigley Field.

The President. Thank you. Well, everybody, the—thank you so much. Let me say, first of all, best swag I've gotten as President represented right here. [*Laughter*] And let me also say on behalf of a lot of folks here in the White House, you've brought a lot of joy to a lot of people here, and we're grateful. I know my former Chief of Staff, now mayor of Chicago, Rahm Emanuel; folks like Dick Durbin, and we've got a whole congressional delegation here; I see Lisa Madigan, my dear friend—just a lot of people have been rooting for you for a long time.

So, even though it will be hard for me, Fergie, to wear a jersey—[*laughter*]—do know that among Sox fans, I'm the Cubs number-one fan. [*Laughter*] All right?

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:40 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Oswaldo J. Guillén Barrios, former shortstop, Paul H. Konerko, former first baseman, and Mark A. Buehrle, former pitcher, Major League Baseball's Chicago White Sox; White House Deputy Chief of Staff Anita J. Decker Breckenridge; White House Trip Manager Luke P. Rosa; David W. Ross and Miguel A. Montero, catchers, Billy L. Williams, former left fielder, Ryne D. Sandberg, former second baseman, Andre D. Dawson and José R. Cardenal, former right fielders, Greg A. Maddux, former pitcher, Mark E. Grace, former first baseman, Lee C. Elia, former manager, Tom Ricketts, co-owner and chairman of the board of directors, Jed D. Hoyer, executive vice president and general manager, Jason McLeod, senior vice president of player development and amateur scouting, Anthony V. Rizzo, first baseman, Kristopher L. Bryant and E. Javier Báez, third basemen, Addison W. Russell, shortstop, Benjamin T. Zobrist, second baseman, W. Dexter Fowler, center fielder, Kyle J. Schwarber, left fielder, and Carl F. Edwards, Jr., and Michael P. Montgomery, pitchers, Chicago Cubs; Julianna Zobrist, wife of Mr. Zobrist; Timothy B. Kurkjian, sports analyst, ESPN; and Illinois State Attorney General Lisa Madigan. Mr. Epstein referred to Cubs historian Ed Hartig; Todd M. Ricketts, President-elect Donald J. Trump's prospective nominee to be Deputy Secretary of Commerce; and Gov. J. Peter Ricketts of Nebraska.

Statement on the First Anniversary of the Implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action To Prevent Iran From Obtaining a Nuclear Weapon
January 16, 2017

Today marks the 1-year anniversary of the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), a deal that has achieved significant, concrete results in making the United States and the world a safer place. This historic understanding reached between the United States, France, the United Kingdom, Germany, China, Russia, the European Union, and Iran has rolled back the Iranian nuclear program and verifiably prevents Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon.

One year ago, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) verified that Iran had fulfilled key commitments spelled out under the JCPOA. Instead of steadily expanding, Iran's nuclear program faces strict limitations and is subject to the most intrusive inspection and verification program ever negotiated to monitor a nuclear program. Iran reduced its uranium stockpile by 98 percent and removed two-thirds of its centrifuges. Meanwhile, Iran has not enriched any uranium at the Fordow facility nor used advanced centrifuges to enrich. In short, Iran is upholding its commitments, demonstrating the success of diplomacy.

While this deal was intended to address Iran's nuclear program, we have remained steadfast in opposing Iran's threats against Israel and our Gulf partners and its support for violent proxies in places like Syria and Yemen. We continue to be deeply concerned about U.S. citizens unjustly imprisoned in Iran. And our sanctions on Iran for its human rights abuses, its support for terrorist groups, and its ballistic missile program will remain until Iran pursues a new path on those issues. There is no question, however, that the challenges we face with Iran would be much worse if Iran were also on the threshold of building a nuclear weapon.

The United States must remember that this agreement was the result of years of work and represents an agreement between the world's major powers, not simply the United States and Iran. Moreover, the Iran deal must be measured against the alternatives. A diplomatic resolution that prevents Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon is far preferable to an unconstrained Iranian nuclear program or another war in the Middle East.

Remarks During White House Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest's Final Briefing and an Exchange With Reporters
January 17, 2017

[*The President joined the briefing in progress.*]

The President. I'm not interrupting because he was saying nice things about you guys—[*laughter*]—because I largely concur.

When I first met Josh Earnest, he was in Iowa. I think he was wearing jeans. He looked even younger than he was. And since my entire campaign depended on communications in Iowa, I gave him a pretty good once-over. And there are a couple things I learned about him right away. Number one, he's just got that all-American, matinee, good-looking thing going. [*Laughter*] That's helpful. Let's face it. Face made for television. [*Laughter*] Then, the guy's name is Josh Earnest—[*laughter*]—which, if somebody is speaking on your behalf, is a pretty good name to have. [*Laughter*]

But what struck me most, in addition to his smarts and his maturity and his actual interest in the issues, was his integrity. There are people you meet who you have a pretty good inkling right off the bat are straight shooters and were raised to be fundamentally honest and to treat people with respect. And there are times where that first impression turns out to be

wrong, and you're a little disappointed. And you see behind the curtain that there's spin and some hype and posturing going on. But then, there's others who, the longer you know them, the better you know them, the more time you spend with them, the more you're tested under tough situations, the more that initial impression is confirmed.

And I have now known this guy for 10 years, almost, and I've watched him grow, and I've watched him advance, and I've watched him marry, and I've watched him be a father, and I've watched him manage younger people coming up behind him. And he's never disappointed. He has always been the guy you wanted him to be.

And I think that if you're the President of the United States and you find out that this is the guy who has been voted the most popular Press Secretary ever by the White House Press Corps, that may make you a little nervous—[*laughter*]—thinking, well, maybe the guy's kind of being too solicitous towards the press. But the fact is, is that he was worthy of that admiration.

He was tough, and he didn't always give you guys everything you wanted. But he was always prepared. He was always courteous. He always tried to make sure that he could share with you as much of our thinking and our policy and our vision as possible and tried to be as responsive as possible. And that's how he trained the rest of his team to be.

So, of the folks that I've had the great joy and pleasure of working with over the last 10 years on this incredible journey, this guy ranks as high as just about anybody I've worked with. He is not only a great Press Secretary, but more importantly, he is a really, really good man. And I'm really, really proud of him.

So, Josh, congratulations.

Press Secretary Earnest. Thank you, sir. I appreciate it.

And, Natalie and Walker, thanks for putting up with all of this, because they've made sacrifices too.

Press Secretary Earnest. Thank you, sir.

President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia

Q. Mr. President, before you go—a response to Vladimir Putin?

The President. I'm going to be here tomorrow. [*Laughter*]

Q. Where are you going on Friday? [*Laughter*]

[*At this point, the President departed, and Press Secretary Earnest continued the briefing.*]

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 12:26 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Natalie Wyeth Earnest, wife, and Walker Earnest, son, of Press Secretary Earnest.

Memorandum on Delegation of Authority to the Secretary of State Under the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017
January 17, 2017

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Delegation of Authority to the Secretary of State Under the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 301 of title 3, United States Code, I hereby order as follows:

I hereby delegate to the Secretary of State the authority vested in the President by section 1287(c)(2) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114–328) (the "Act"), to designate a senior official to develop guidance for the Global Engagement Center relating to relevant privacy and civil liberties laws, and to ensure compliance with such guidance.

Any reference in this memorandum to the Act shall be deemed to be a reference to any

future Act that is the same or substantially the same as such provision.

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum. This memorandum was not received for publication in the *Federal Register*.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the United States-Serbia Extradition Treaty
January 17, 2017

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Extradition Treaty between the United States of America and the Republic of Serbia (the "Treaty"), signed at Belgrade on August 15, 2016. I also transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty would replace the Treaty between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Servia for the Mutual Extradition of Fugitives from Justice, signed October 25, 1901 (the "1901 Treaty"), which applies to the Republic of Serbia as a successor state to the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Treaty follows generally the form and content of other extradition treaties recently concluded by the United States. It would replace an outmoded list of extraditable offenses with a modern "dual criminality" approach, which would enable extradition for such offenses as money laundering, cyber-related crimes, and other newer offenses not appearing on the 1901 Treaty list. The Treaty also provides that extradition shall not be refused based on the nationality of the person sought and contains a modernized "political offense" clause. Finally, the Treaty incorporates a series of procedural improvements to streamline and expedite the extradition process.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
January 17, 2017.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the United States-Kosovo Extradition Treaty
January 17, 2017

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Extradition Treaty between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Kosovo (the "Treaty"), signed at Pristina on March 29, 2016. I also transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty would replace the Treaty between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Servia for the Mutual Extradition of Fugitives from Justice, signed October 25, 1901 (the "1901 Treaty"), which applies to the Republic of Kosovo as a successor state to the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The Treaty follows generally the form and content of other extradition treaties recently concluded by the United States. It would replace an outmoded list of extraditable offenses with a modern "dual criminality" approach,

which would enable extradition for such offenses as money laundering, cyber-related crimes, and other newer offenses not appearing on the 1901 Treaty list. The Treaty also provides that extradition shall not be refused based on the nationality of the person sought and contains a modernized "political offense" clause. Finally, the Treaty incorporates a series of procedural improvements to streamline and expedite the extradition process.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
January 17, 2017.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

The President's News Conference
January 18, 2017

The President. Good afternoon, everybody. Let me start out by saying that I was sorely tempted to wear a tan suit today—[*laughter*]—for my last press conference. But Michelle, whose fashion sense is a little better than mine, tells me that's not appropriate in January. [*Laughter*]

I covered a lot of the ground that I would want to cover in my Farewell Address last week. So I'm just going to say a couple of quick things before I start taking questions.

First, we have been in touch with the Bush family today, after hearing about President George H.W. Bush and Barbara Bush being admitted to the hospital this morning. They have not only dedicated their lives to this country, they have been a constant source of friendship and support and good counsel for Michelle and me over the years. They are as fine a couple as we know. And so we want to send our prayers and our love to them. Really good people.

Second thing I want to do is to thank all of you. Some of you have been covering me for a long time; I see folks like Christi and Lynn. Some of you I've just gotten to know. We have traveled the world together. We've hit a few singles, a few doubles together. I've offered advice that I thought was pretty sound, like, "Don't do stupid stuff." [*Laughter*] And even when you complained about my long answers, I just want you to know that the only reason they were long was because you asked six-part questions. [*Laughter*]

But I have enjoyed working with all of you. That does not, of course, mean that I've enjoyed every story that you have filed. But that's the point of this relationship. You're not supposed to be sycophants, you're supposed to be skeptics. You're supposed to ask me tough questions. You're not supposed to be complimentary, but you're supposed to cast a critical eye on folks who hold enormous power and make sure that we are accountable to the people who sent us here.

And you have done that. And you've done it, for the most part, in ways that I could appreciate for fairness even if I didn't always agree with your conclusions. And having you in this building has made this place work better. It keeps us honest. It makes us work harder. You have—it made us think about how we are doing what we do and whether or not we're able to deliver on what's been requested by our constituents.

And, for example, every time you've asked, "Why haven't you cured Ebola yet?" or "Why is there that—still that hole in the Gulf?" it has given me the ability to go back to my team and say, "Will you get this solved before the next press conference?" [*Laughter*]

Now, I spent a lot of time on my—in my Farewell Address talking about the state of our democracy. It goes without saying that essential to that is a free press. That is part of how this place, this country, this grand experiment in self-government has to work. It doesn't work if we don't have a well-informed citizenry. And

you are the conduit through which they receive the information about what's taking place in the halls of power.

So America needs you, and our democracy needs you. We need you to establish a baseline of facts and evidence that we can use as a starting point for the kind of reasoned and informed debates that ultimately lead to progress. And so my hope is, is that you will continue with the same tenacity that you showed us to do the hard work of getting to the bottom of stories and getting them right and to push those of us in power to be the best version of ourselves and to push this country to be the best version of itself.

I have no doubt that you will do so. I'm looking forward to being an active consumer of your work rather than always the subject of it. I want to thank you all for your extraordinary service to our democracy.

And with that, I will take some questions. And I will start with Jeff Mason, whose term apparently is not up. [*Laughter*] I thought we'd be going out together, brother, but you got to hang around for a while. [*Laughter*]

Q. No, I'm staying put.

The President. Jeff Mason, Reuters.

Former U.S. Army Intelligence Analyst Chelsea E. Manning/Leaking of Classified Information/WikiLeaks Founder Julian P. Assange/Cybersecurity

Q. Thank you, sir. Are you concerned, Mr. President, that commuting Chelsea Manning's sentence will send a message that leaking classified material will not generate a tough sentence to groups like WikiLeaks? How do you reconcile that in light of WikiLeaks' connection to Russia's hacking in last year's election? And related to that, Julian Assange has now offered to come to the United States. Are you seeking that? And would he be charged or arrested if he came here?

The President. Well, first of all, let's be clear: Chelsea Manning has served a tough prison sentence. So the notion that the average person who was thinking about disclosing vital, classified information would think that it goes unpunished I don't think would get that impression from the sentence that Chelsea Manning has served.

It has been my view that given she went to trial, that due process was carried out, that she took responsibility for her crime, that the sentence that she received was very disproportional—disproportionate relative to what other leakers had received, and that she had served a significant amount of time, that it made sense to commute—and not pardon—her sentence.

And I feel very comfortable that justice has been served and that a message has still been sent that when it comes to our national security, that wherever possible, we need folks who may have legitimate concerns about the actions of Government or their superiors or the agencies in which they work, that they try to work through the established channels and avail themselves of the whistleblower protections that had been put in place.

I recognize that there's some folks who think they're not enough, and I think all of us, when we're working in big institutions, may find ourselves at times at odds with policies that are set. But when it comes to national security, we're often dealing with people in the field whose lives may be put at risk, or the safety and security and the ability of our military or our intelligence teams or our Embassies to function effectively. And that has to be kept in mind.

So, with respect to WikiLeaks, I don't see a contradiction. First of all, I haven't commented on WikiLeaks, generally. The conclusions of the intelligence community with respect to the Russian hacking were not conclusive as to whether WikiLeaks was witting or not in being the conduit through which we heard about the DNC e-mails that were leaked.

I don't pay a lot of attention to Mr. Assange's tweets, so that wasn't a consideration in this instance. And I'd refer you to the Justice Department for any criminal investigations, indictments, extradition issues that may come up with him.

What I can say broadly is that, in this new cyber age, we're going to have to make sure that we continually work to find the right balance of accountability and openness and trans-

parency that is the hallmark of our democracy, but also recognize that there are adversaries and bad actors out there who want to use that same openness in ways that hurt us, whether that's in trying to commit financial crimes or trying to commit acts of terrorism or folks who want to interfere with our elections.

And we're going to have to continually build the kind of architecture that makes sure our—the best of our democracy is preserved; that our national security and intelligence agencies have the ability to carry out policy without advertising to our adversaries what it is that we're doing, but do so in a way that still keeps citizens up to speed on what their Government's doing on their behalf.

But with respect to Chelsea Manning, I looked at the particulars of this case the same way I have for the other commutations and pardons that I've done, and I felt that in light of all the circumstances that commuting her sentence was entirely appropriate.

Margaret Brennan [CBS News].

Q. Mr. President.

The President. There you are.

Russia-U.S. Relations/Ukraine/Nuclear Nonproliferation/Human Rights

Q. Thank you. The President-elect has said that he would consider lifting sanctions on Russia if they substantially reduced their nuclear stockpile. Given your own efforts at arms control, do you think that's an effective strategy? Knowing this office and Mr. Trump, how would you advise his advisers to help him be effective when he deals with Vladimir Putin? And given your actions recently on Russia, do you think those sanctions should be viewed as leverage?

The President. Well, a couple of things. Number one, I think it is in America's interests and the world's interests that we have a constructive relationship with Russia. That's been my approach throughout my Presidency. Where our interests have overlapped, we've worked together. At the beginning of my term, I did what I could to encourage Russia to be a constructive member of the international community and tried to work with the President and the Government of Russia in helping them diversify their economy, improve their economy, use the incredible talents of the Russian people in more constructive ways.

I think it's fair to say that after President Putin came back into the Presidency that an escalating anti-American rhetoric and an approach to global affairs that seemed to be premised on the idea that whatever America is trying to do must be bad for Russia and so we want to try and counteract whatever they do, that return to an adversarial spirit that, I think, existed during the cold war has made the relationship more difficult. And it was hammered home when Russia went into Crimea and portions of Ukraine.

The reason we imposed the sanctions, recall, was not because of nuclear weapons issues. It was because the independence and sovereignty of a country, Ukraine, had been encroached upon, by force, by Russia. That wasn't our judgment, that was the judgment of the entire international community. And Russia continues to occupy Ukrainian territory and meddle in Ukrainian affairs and support military surrogates who have violated basic international law and international norms.

What I've said to the Russians is, as soon as you stop doing that, the sanctions will be removed. And I think it would probably best serve not only American interests, but also the interests of preserving international norms if we made sure that we don't confuse why these sanctions have been imposed with a whole set of other issues.

On nuclear issues, in my first term, we negotiated the START II Treaty, and that has substantially reduced our nuclear stockpiles, both Russia and the United States. I was prepared to go further. I told President Putin I was prepared to go further. They have been unwilling to negotiate. If President-elect Trump is able to restart those talks in a serious way, I think there is—remains a lot of room for our two countries to reduce our stockpiles. And part of the reason we've been successful on our nonproliferation agenda and on our nuclear security agenda is because we were leading by example.

I hope that continues. But I think it's important just to remember that the reason sanctions have been put in place against Russia has to do with their actions in Ukraine. And it is important for the United States to stand up for the basic principle that big countries don't go around and invade and bully smaller countries. I've said before, I expect Russia and Ukraine to have a strong relationship. They are, historically, bound together in all sorts of cultural and social ways. But Ukraine is an independent country.

And this is a good example of the vital role that America has to continue to play around the world in preserving basic norms and values, whether it's advocating on behalf of human rights, advocating on behalf of women's rights, advocating on behalf of freedom of the press.

The United States has not always been perfect in this regard. There are times where we, by necessity, are dealing with allies or friends or partners who, themselves, are not meeting the standards that we would like to see met when it comes to international rules and norms. But I can tell you that in every multilateral setting—in the United Nations, in the G–20, in the G–7—the United States typically has been on the right side of these issues. And it is important for us to continue to be on the right side of these issues, because if we, the largest, strongest country and democracy in the world, are not willing to stand up on behalf of these values, then certainly China, Russia, and others will not.

Kevin Corke [Fox News].

President-Elect Donald J. Trump

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. You have been a strong supporter of the idea of a peaceful transfer of power, demonstrated not terribly far from here, out in the Rose Garden. And yet, even as you and I speak, there are more than five dozen Democrats that are going to boycott the Inauguration of the incoming President. Do you support that? And what message would you send to Democrats to better demonstrate the peaceful transfer of power?

And if I could follow, I wanted to ask you about your conversations with the President-elect previously. And without getting into too much of the personal side of it, I'm just curious, were you able to use that opportunity to convince him to take a fresh look at some of the important ideas that you will leave this office with: maintaining some semblance of the Affordable Care Act, some idea of keeping DREAMers here in the country without fear of deportation. Were you able to use personal stories to try to convince him? And how successful were you?

The President. Well, I won't go into details of my conversations with President-elect Trump. As I've said before, they are cordial. At times, they've been fairly lengthy, and they've been substantive. I can't tell you how convincing I've been. I think you'd have to ask him whether I've been convincing or not.

I have offered my best advice, counsel about certain issues both foreign and domestic. And my working assumption is, is that having won an election opposed to a number of my initiatives and certain aspects of my vision for where the country needs to go, it is appropriate for him to go forward with his vision and his values. And I don't expect that there's going to be enormous overlap.

It may be that on certain issues, once he comes into office and he looks at the complexities of how to, in fact, provide health care for everybody—something he says he wants to do—or wants to make sure that he is encouraging job creation and wage growth in this country, that that may lead him to some of the same conclusions that I arrived at once I got here.

But I don't think we'll know until he has an actual chance to get sworn in and sit behind that desk. And I think a lot of his views are going to be shaped by his advisers, the people around him, which is why it's important to pay attention to these confirmation hearings.

I can tell you that—and this is something I have told him—that this is a job of such magnitude that you can't do it by yourself. You are enormously reliant on a team: your Cabinet, your senior White House staff, all the way to fairly junior folks in their twenties and thirties,

but who are executing on significant responsibilities.

And so how you put a team together to make sure that they're getting you the best information and they are teeing up the options from which you will ultimately make decisions, that's probably the most useful advice, the most constructive advice that I've been able to give him. That if you find yourself isolated because the process breaks down, or if you're only hearing from people who agree with you on everything, or if you haven't created a process that is fact-checking and probing and asking hard questions about policies or promises that you've made, that's when you start making mistakes. And as I indicated in some of my previous remarks, reality has a way of biting back if you're not paying attention to it.

With respect to the Inauguration, I'm not going to comment on those issues. All I know is I'm going to be there. [*Laughter*] So is Michelle. And I have been checking the weather, and I'm heartened by the fact that it won't be as cold as my first Inauguration—[*laughter*]—because that was cold.

Janet Rodriguez [Univision].

The President's Plans After Leaving Office/Immigration/Cuba-U.S. Relations

Q. Right here, Mr. President. Thank you very much. You have said that you would come back to fight for the DREAMers. You said that a couple of weeks ago. Are you fearful for the status of those DREAMers, the future of the young immigrants and all immigrants in this country, with the new administration? And what did you mean when you said you would come back? Would you lobby Congress? Maybe explore the political arena again? And if I may ask you a second question, why did you take action on "dry foot, wet foot" a week ago?

The President. Well, let me be absolutely clear. I did not mean that I was going to be running for anything anytime soon. [*Laughter*] So no, what I meant is that it's important for me to take some time to process this amazing experience that we've gone through; to make sure that my wife, with whom I will be celebrating a 25th anniversary this year, is willing to re-up and put up with me for a little bit longer. I want to do some writing. I want to be quiet a little bit and not hear myself talk so darn much. I want to spend precious time with my girls.

So those are my priorities this year. But as I said before, I'm still a citizen. And I think it is important for Democrats or progressives who feel that they came out on the wrong side of this election to be able to distinguish between the normal back and forth, ebb and flow of policy: Are we going to raise taxes or are we going to lower taxes? Are we going to expand this program or eliminate this program? How concerned are we about air pollution or climate change? Those are all normal parts of the debate. And as I've said before, in a democracy, sometimes, you're going to win on those issues and sometimes you're going to lose.

I'm confident about the rightness of my positions on a lot of these points, but we've got a new President and a Congress that are going to make their same determinations. And there will be a back and forth in Congress around those issues, and you guys will report on all that.

But there's a difference between that normal functioning of politics and certain issues or certain moments where I think our core values may be at stake. I put in that category, if I saw systematic discrimination being ratified in some fashion. I put in that category explicit or functional obstacles to people being able to vote, to exercise their franchise. I'd put in that category institutional efforts to silence dissent or the press.

And for me, at least, I would put in that category efforts to round up kids who have grown up here and for all practical purposes are American kids and send them someplace else when they love this country, they are our kids' friends and our—their classmates and are now entering into community colleges or, in some cases, serving in our military. That—the notion that we would just arbitrarily or because of politics, punish those kids when they didn't do anything wrong themselves, I think, would be something that would merit me speaking out.

It doesn't mean that I would get on the ballot anywhere.

With respect to "wet foot, dry foot," we underwent a monumental shift in our policy towards Cuba. My view was, after 50 years of a policy not working, it made sense for us to try to reopen diplomatic relations, to engage a Cuban Government, to be honest with them about the strong disagreements we have around political repression and treatment of dissenters and freedom of press and freedom of religion, but that to make progress for the Cuban people, our best shot was to suddenly have the Cuban people interacting with Americans and seeing the incredible success of the Cuban American community and engaging in commerce and business and trade, and that it was through that process of opening up these bilateral relations that you would see over time serious and significant improvement.

Given that shift in the relationship, the policy that we had in place was "wet foot, dry foot," which treated Cuban emigres completely different from folks from El Salvador or Guatemala or Nicaragua or any other part of the world, one that made a distinction between whether you got here by land or by foot, that was a carryover of a old way of thinking that didn't make sense in this day and age, particularly as we're opening up travel between the two countries.

And so we had very lengthy consultations with the Department of Homeland Security. We had some tough negotiations with the Cuban Government. But we arrived at a policy which we think is both fair and appropriate to the changing nature of the relationship between the two countries.

Nadia Bilbassy [Nadia Bilbassy-Charters, Al Arabiya].

Q. Thank you, sir. I appreciate the opportunity, and I want to wish you and your family best of luck in the future.

The President. Thank you.

Arab-Israeli Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, you have been criticized and even personally attacked for the U.N. Security Council resolution that considered Israeli settlements illegal and an obstacle to peace. Mr. Trump promised to move the Embassy to Jerusalem. He appointed an Ambassador that doesn't believe in the two-state solution. How worried are you about the U.S. leadership in the Arab world and beyond as an honest broker? Will this ignite a third intifada? Will this even protect Israel? And in retrospect, do you think that you should have held Israel more accountable, like President Bush, Senior, did with the loan guarantees? Thank you.

The President. I am—I continue to be significantly worried about the Israeli-Palestinian issue. And I'm worried about it both because I think the status quo is unsustainable, that it is dangerous for Israel, that it is bad for Palestinians, it is bad for the region, and it is bad for America's national security.

And I came into this office wanting to do everything I could to encourage serious peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians. And we invested a lot of energy, a lot of time, a lot of effort, first year, second year, all the way until last year. Ultimately, what has always been clear is that we cannot force the parties to arrive at peace. What we can do is facilitate, provide a platform, encourage. But we can't force them to do it.

But in light of shifts in Israeli politics and Palestinian politics; a rightward drift in Israeli politics; a weakening of President Abbas's ability to move and take risks on behalf of peace in the Palestinian Territories; in light of all the dangers that have emerged in the region and the understandable fears that Israelis may have about the chaos and rise of groups like ISIL and the deterioration of Syria—in light of all those things, what we at least wanted to do, understanding that the two parties wouldn't actually arrive at a final status agreement, is to preserve the possibility of a two-state solution, because we do not see an alternative to it.

And I've said this directly to Prime Minister Netanyahu. I've said it inside of Israel. I've said it to Palestinians as well. I don't see how this issue gets resolved in a way that maintains Israel as both Jewish and a democracy, because if you do not have two states, then in some form or

fashion you are extending an occupation. Functionally, you end up having one state in which millions of people are disenfranchised and operate as second-class occupants—or residents. You can't even call them citizens, necessarily.

And so the goal of the resolution was to simply say that the settlements—the growth of the settlements—are creating a reality on the ground that increasingly will make a two-state solution impossible. And we believed, consistent with the position that had been taken with previous U.S. administrations for decades now, that it was important for us to send a signal, a wake-up call, that this moment may be passing, and Israeli voters and Palestinians need to understand that this moment may be passing. And hopefully, that then creates a debate inside both Israeli and Palestinian communities that won't result immediately in peace, but at least will lead to a more sober assessment of what the alternatives are.

So the President-elect will have his own policy. The Ambassador—or the candidate for the Ambassadorship obviously has very different views than I do. That is their prerogative. That's part of what happens after elections. And I think my views are clear. We'll see how their approach plays itself out.

I don't want to project today what could end up happening, but obviously, it's a volatile environment. What we've seen in the past is, when sudden, unilateral moves are made that speak to some of the core issues and sensitivities of either side, that can be explosive. And I—what we've tried to do in the transition is just to provide the context in which the President-elect may want to make some of these decisions.

Q. Are you worried that this—[*inaudible*].

The President. Well, that's part of what we've tried to indicate to the incoming team in our transition process, is pay attention to this, because this is volatile stuff. People feel deeply and passionately about this. And as I've said, I think, many times, the actions that we take have enormous consequences and ramifications.

We're the biggest kid on the block. And I think it is right and appropriate for a new President to test old assumptions and reexamine the old ways of doing things. But if you're going to make big shifts in policy, just make sure you've thought it through, and understand that there are going to be consequences, and actions typically create reactions, and so you want to be intentional about it. You don't want to do things off the cuff when it comes to an issue this volatile.

Chris Johnson [Washington Blade]. Chris Johnson.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights

Q. On LGBT rights——

The President. I'm sorry, where is Chris?

Q. I'm right here in the back, Mr. President.

The President. I'm sorry. I didn't see you.

Q. On LGBT rights, we've seen a lot of achievements over the past 8 years, including signing hate crimes protection legislation, "don't ask, don't tell" repeal, marriage equality nationwide, and ensuring transgender people feel visible and accepted. How do you think LGBT rights will rank in terms of your accomplishments and your legacy? And how confident are you that progress will endure or continue under the President-elect?

The President. I could not be prouder of the transformation that's taken place in our society just in the last decade. And I've said before, I think we made some useful contributions to it, but the primary heroes in this stage of our growth as a democracy and a society are all the individual activists and sons and daughters and couples who courageously said, "This is who I am, and I'm proud of it."

And that opened people's minds and opened their hearts. And eventually, laws caught up. But I don't think any of that would have happened without the activism, in some cases, loud and noisy, but in some cases, just quiet and very personal.

And I think that what we did as an administration was to help to—the society to move in a better direction, but to do so in a way that didn't create an enormous backlash and was

systematic and respectful of the fact that, in some cases, these issues were controversial.

I think that the way we handled, for example, "don't ask, don't tell"—being methodical about it, working with the Joint Chiefs, making sure that we showed this would not have an impact on the effectiveness of the greatest military on Earth—and then to have a Defense Secretary in Bob Gates and a Chairman in Mike Mullen and a Joint Chiefs who were open to evidence and ultimately worked with me to do the right thing, I am proud of that. But again, none of that would have happened without this incredible transformation that was happening in society out there.

You know, when I gave Ellen the Presidential Medal of Freedom, I meant what I said. I think somebody that kind and likeable projecting into living rooms around the country, that changed attitudes. And that wasn't easy to do for her. And that's just one small example of what was happening in countless communities all across the country.

So I'm proud that in certain places we maybe provided a good block downfield to help the movement advance.

I don't think it is something that will be reversible because American society has changed; the attitudes of young people, in particular, have changed. That doesn't mean there aren't going to be some fights that are important—legal issues, issues surrounding transgender persons—there are still going to be some battles that need to take place.

But if you talk to young people—Malia, Sasha's generation—even if they're Republicans, even if they're conservative, many of them would tell you, I don't understand how you would discriminate against somebody because of sexual orientation. That's just sort of burned into them in pretty powerful ways.

April Ryan [American Urban Radio Network].

Diversity/U.S. Olympic Team/Economic Inequality/Voting Rights/Congressional Redistricting/Criminal Justice Reform/Campaign Finance Reform

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Long before today, you've been considered a rights President. Under your watch, people have said that you have expanded the rubberband of inclusion. And with the election and the incoming administration, people are saying that rubberband has recoiled and maybe is even broken. And I'm taking you back to a time on Air Force One going to Selma, Alabama, when you said your job was to close the gaps that remain. And with that, what gaps still remain when it comes to rights issues on the table? And also, what part will you play in fixing those gaps after—in your new life?

And lastly, you are the first Black President. Do you expect this country will see this again?

The President. Well, I'll answer the last question first. I think we're going to see people of merit rise up from every race, faith, corner of this country, because that's America's strength. When we have everybody getting a chance and everybody is on the field, we end up being better.

I think I've used this analogy before. We killed it in the Olympics in Brazil. And Michelle and I, we always have our—the Olympic team here. And it's a lot of fun, first of all, just because anytime you're meeting somebody who is the best at anything—[*laughter*]—it's impressive. And these mostly very young people are all just so healthy looking, and they just beam and exude fitness and health. And so we have a great time talking to them.

But they are of all shapes, sizes, colors; the genetic diversity that is on display is remarkable. And if you look at a Simone Biles, and then you look at a Michael Phelps, they're completely different. And it's precisely because of those differences that we've got people here who can excel at any sport.

And by the way, more than half of our medals came from women. And the reason is, is because we had the foresight several decades ago, with something called Title IX, to make sure that women got opportunities in sports, which is why our women compete better, because they have more opportunities than folks in other countries.

So I use that as a metaphor. And if in fact we continue to keep opportunity open to everybody, then, yes, we're going to have a woman

President, we're going to have a Latino President, and we'll have a Jewish President, a Hindu President. Who knows who we're going to have? I suspect we'll have a whole bunch of mixed-up Presidents at some point that nobody really knows what to call them. [*Laughter*] And that's fine.

Now, what do I worry about? I obviously spent a lot of time on this, April, at my Farewell Address on Tuesday, so I won't go through the whole list. I worry about inequality, because I think that if we are not investing in making sure everybody plays a role in this economy, the economy will not grow as fast, and I think it will also lead to further and further separation between us as Americans, and I—not just along racial lines. I mean, there are a whole bunch of folks who voted for the President-elect because they feel forgotten and disenfranchised. They feel as if they're being looked down on. They feel as if their kids aren't going to have the same opportunities as they did.

And you don't want to have an America in which a handful—a very small sliver of people are doing really well and everybody else is fighting for scraps, as I said last week. Because that's oftentimes when racial divisions get magnified, because people think, well, the only way I'm going to get ahead is if I make sure somebody else gets less, somebody who doesn't look like me or doesn't worship at the same place I do. That's not a good recipe for our democracy.

I worry about, as I said in response to a previous question, making sure that the basic machinery of our democracy works better. We are the only country in the advanced world that makes it harder to vote rather than easier. And that dates back; there's an ugly history to that that we should not be shy about talking about.

Q. Voting rights?

The President. Yes, I'm talking about voting rights. The reason that we are the only country among advanced democracies that makes it harder to vote is—it traces directly back to Jim Crow and the legacy of slavery. And it became, sort of, acceptable to restrict the franchise. And that's not who we are. That shouldn't be who we are. That's not when America works best.

So I hope that people pay a lot of attention to making sure that everybody has a chance to vote. Make it easier, not harder. This whole notion of election—of voting fraud, this is something that has constantly been disproved. This is fake news, the notion that there are a whole bunch of people out there who are going out there and are not eligible to vote and want to vote. We have the opposite problem. We have a whole bunch of people who are eligible to vote who don't vote. And so the idea that we'd put in place a whole bunch of barriers to people voting doesn't make sense.

And then the—as I've said before, political gerrymandering that makes your vote matter less because politicians have decided you live in a district where everybody votes the same way you do so that these aren't competitive races, and we get 90-percent Democratic districts, 90-percent Republican districts, that's bad for our democracy too. I worry about that.

I think it is very important for us to make sure that our criminal justice system is fair and just. But I also think it's also very important to make sure that it is not politicized, that it maintains an integrity that is outside of partisan politics at every level.

I think at some point we're going to have to spend—and this will require some action by the Supreme Court—we have to reexamine just the flood of endless money that goes into our politics, which I think is very unhealthy.

So there are a whole bunch of things I worry about there. And as I said in my speech on Tuesday, we've got more work to do on race. It is not—it is simply not true that things have gotten worse. They haven't. Things are getting better. And I have more confidence on racial issues in the next generation than I do in our generation or the previous generation. I think kids are smarter about it. They're more tolerant. They are more inclusive by instinct than we are. And hopefully, my Presidency maybe helped that along a little bit.

But you know, we—when we feel stress, when we feel pressure, when we're just fed information that encourages some of our worst

instincts, we tend to fall back into some of the old racial fears and racial divisions and racial stereotypes. And it's very hard for us to break out of those and to listen and to think about people as people and to imagine being in that person's shoes.

And by the way, it's no longer a Black and White issue alone. You've got Hispanic folks, and you've got Asian folks, and this is not just the same old battles. We've got this stew that's bubbling up of people from everywhere. And we're going to have to make sure that we, in our own lives, in our own families and workplaces, do a better job of treating everybody with basic respect and understanding that not everybody starts off in the same situation and imagining what would it be like if you were born in an inner city and had no job prospects anywhere within a 20-mile radius, or how does it feel being born in some rural county where there's no job opportunities in a 20-mile radius—and seeing those two things as connected as opposed to separate.

So we've got work to do. But overall, I think on this front, the trend lines ultimately, I think, will be good.

Christi Parsons [Chicago Tribune]. And Christi, you are going to get the last question.

Q. Oh, no. [*Laughter*]

The President. Christi is—I've been knowing her since Springfield, Illinois. When I was a State senator, she listened to what I had to say. [*Laughter*] So the least I can do is give her the last question as President of the United States. Go ahead.

Q. That 217 number still works, so—[*laughter*].

The President. There you go. Go ahead.

Q. Well, thank you, Mr. President. It has been an honor.

The President. Thank you.

The President's Daughters/2016 Presidential Election

Q. And I have a personal question for you, because I know how much you like those. The First Lady put the stakes of the 2016 election in very personal terms in a speech that resonated across the country, and she really spoke the concerns of a lot of women, LGBT folks, people of color, many others. And so I wonder now how you and the First Lady are talking to your daughters about the meaning of this election and how you interpret it for yourself and for them.

The President. You know, every parent brags on their daughters or their sons. If your mom and dad don't brag on you, you know, you've got problems. [*Laughter*] But, man, my daughters are something, and they just surprise and enchant and impress me more and more every single day as they grow up. And so these days, when we talk, we talk as parent to child, but also we learn from them.

And I think it was really interesting to see how Malia and Sasha reacted. They were disappointed. They paid attention to what their mom said during the campaign and believed it because it's consistent with what we've tried to teach them in our household and what I've tried to model as a father with their mom and what we've asked them to expect from future boyfriends or spouses.

But what we've also tried to teach them is resilience, and we've tried to teach them hope, and that the only thing that is the end of the world is the end of the world. And so you get knocked down, you get up, brush yourself off, and you get back to work. And that tended to be their attitude.

I think neither of them intend to pursue a future of politics, and in that too, I think their mother's influence shows. [*Laughter*] But both of them have grown up in an environment where I think they could not help but be patriotic, to love this country deeply, to see that it's flawed, but see that they have responsibilities to fix it. And that they need to be active citizens, and they have to be in a position to talk to their friends and their teachers and their future coworkers in ways that try to shed some light as opposed to just generate a lot of sound and fury.

And I expect that's what they're going to do. They do not—they don't mope. And what I really am proud of them—but what makes me proudest about them is that they also don't get cynical about it. They have not assumed because their side didn't win or because some of

the values that they care about don't seem as if they were vindicated, that automatically America has somehow rejected them or rejected their values or—I don't think they feel that way.

I think that they have, in part through osmosis, in part through dinnertime conversations, appreciated the fact that this is a big, complicated country, and democracy is messy, and it doesn't always work exactly the way you might want, it doesn't guarantee certain outcomes. But if you're engaged and you're involved, then there are a lot more good people than bad in this country, and there's a core decency to this country, and that they've got to be a part of lifting that up.

And I expect they will be. And in that sense, they are representative of this generation that makes me really optimistic.

I've been asked—I've had some off-the-record conversations with some journalists where they said, okay, you seem like you're okay, but really, really, what are you thinking? [*Laughter*] And I've said, no, I—what I'm saying really is what I think. I believe in this country. I believe in the American people. I believe that people are more good than bad. I believe tragic things happen, I think there's evil in the world, but I think that at the end of the day, if we work hard and if we're true to those things in us that feel true and feel right, that the world gets a little better each time.

That's what this Presidency has tried to be about. And I see that in the young people I've worked with. I couldn't be prouder of them. And so this is not just a matter of "No Drama Obama." [*Laughter*] This is what I really believe. It is true that behind closed doors I curse more than I do publicly. [*Laughter*] And sometimes, I get mad and frustrated like everybody else does. But at my core, I think we're going to be okay. We just have to fight for it. We have to work for it and not take it for granted. And I know that you will help us do that.

Thank you very much, press corps. Good luck.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 2:24 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Lynn Sweet, columnist and Washington bureau chief, Chicago Sun-Times; Prime Minister Dmitriy Anatolyevich Medvedev of Russia, in his former capacity as President of Russia; President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority; Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel; David M. Friedman, President-elect Trump's prospective nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Israel; former Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates; former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Michael G. Mullen; television personality Ellen L. DeGeneres; and Simone Biles, gymnast, and Michael F. Phelps II, swimmer, 2016 U.S. Olympic Team. He also referred to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Detention Facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba
January 19, 2017

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Mr. President:)

For 15 years, the United States has detained hundreds of people at the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, a facility that never should have been opened in the first place. Rather than keeping us safer, the detention facility at Guantanamo undermines American national security. Terrorists use it for propaganda, its operations drain our military resources during a time of budget cuts, and it harms our partnerships with allies and countries whose cooperation we need against today's evolving terrorist threat. By any measure, the costs of keeping it open far exceed the complications involved in closing it.

As President, I have tried to close Guantanamo. When I inherited this challenge, it was

widely recognized that the facility—which many around the world continue to condemn—needed to close. Unfortunately, what had previously been bipartisan support for closure suddenly became a partisan issue. Despite those politics, we have made progress. This Administration established a comprehensive, interagency review process to assess whether the transfer of a detainee is in the national security interest of the United States. Under this rigorous process, we have transferred 196 detainees from Guantanamo with arrangements designed to keep them from engaging in acts that pose a threat to the United States and our allies. Of the nearly 800 detainees at one time held at the facility, today only 41 remain.

The Department of Defense has also provided the Congress with a comprehensive plan to finally close Guantanamo once and for all. In addition to calling for us to continue to identify and effectuate secure transfer opportunities, it calls for the continued periodic review of the threat posed by individuals still detained, the use of all legal tools to deal with the remaining detainees still held under law of war detention, and the identification of a secure location in the United States to hold remaining detainees who are subject to military commissions or who we have determined must continue to be detained because they pose a continuing significant threat to the United States. I have included an update to that plan here.

The restrictions imposed by the Congress that prevent us from imprisoning detainees—even to prosecute and secure a life sentence—in the United States make no sense. No person has ever escaped one of our super-max or military prisons here, ever. There is simply no justification beyond politics for the Congress' insistence on keeping the facility open. Members of Congress who obstruct efforts to close the facility, given the stakes involved for our security, have abdicated their responsibility to the American people. They have placed politics above the ongoing costs to taxpayers, our relationships with our allies, and the threat posed to U.S. national security by leaving open a facility that governments around the world condemn and which hinders rather than helps our fight against terrorism.

If this were easy, we would have closed Guantanamo years ago. But history will cast a harsh judgment on this aspect of our fight against terrorism and those of us who fail to bring it to a responsible end. Once again, I encourage the Congress to close the facility and permit more of our brave men and women in uniform serving at Guantanamo Bay to return to meeting the challenges of the 21st century around the globe. There remains bipartisan support for closing Guantanamo and we can do so in a responsible and secure way that also saves the American taxpayer money. Guantanamo is contrary to our values and undermines our standing in the world, and it is long past time to end this chapter in our history.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Paul D. Ryan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Orrin G. Hatch, President pro tempore of the Senate. The Office of the Press Secretary released a report, "Obama Administration Efforts To Close the Guantanamo Bay Detention Facility," with this letter. An original was not available for verification of the content of the letter.

Message to the Nation on Serving as President
January 19, 2017

My fellow Americans,

It's a long-standing tradition for the sitting president of the United States to leave a parting letter in the Oval Office for the American elected to take his or her place. It's a letter meant to share what we know, what we've learned, and what small wisdom may help our successor bear the great responsibility that comes with the highest office in our land, and the leadership of the free world.

But before I leave my note for our 45th president, I wanted to say one final thank you

for the honor of serving as your 44th. Because all that I've learned in my time in office, I've learned from you. You made me a better President, and you made me a better man.

Throughout these eight years, you have been the source of goodness, resilience, and hope from which I've pulled strength. I've seen neighbors and communities take care of each other during the worst economic crisis of our lifetimes. I have mourned with grieving families searching for answers—and found grace in a Charleston church.

I've taken heart from the hope of young graduates and our newest military officers. I've seen our scientists help a paralyzed man regain his sense of touch, and wounded warriors once given up for dead walk again. I've seen Americans whose lives have been saved because they finally have access to medical care, and families whose lives have been changed because their marriages are recognized as equal to our own. I've seen the youngest of children remind us through their actions and through their generosity of our obligations to care for refugees, or work for peace, and, above all, to look out for each other.

I've seen you, the American people, in all your decency, determination, good humor, and kindness. And in your daily acts of citizenship, I've seen our future unfolding.

All of us, regardless of party, should throw ourselves into that work—the joyous work of citizenship. Not just when there's an election, not just when our own narrow interest is at stake, but over the full span of a lifetime.

I'll be right there with you every step of the way.

And when the arc of progress seems slow, remember: America is not the project of any one person. The single most powerful word in our democracy is the word "We." "We the People." "We shall overcome."

Yes, we can.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary as an e-mail message from the President distributed to the White House e-mail list and posted on the White House blog. The message referred to President-elect Donald J. Trump; and Dunbar, PA, resident Nathan Copeland, a patient at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center in Pittsburgh, PA.

Appendix A—Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this book.

July 1

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President had a telephone conversation with Garrison Keilor, host of Minnesota Public Radio's "A Prairie Home Companion" program, for a segment on Mr. Keilor's final broadcast on July 2.

During the day, the President was briefed by Assitant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa O. Monaco on the ongoing hostage situation at the Holey Artisan Bakery in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

July 2

The White House announced that the President will travel to Charlotte, NC, on July 5.

July 3

In the morning, at an office building in Washington, DC, the President and Mrs. Obama met with Barack Obama Foundation staff members to review architecture and design proposals for the Obama Presidential Center to be constructed in Chicago, IL.

July 5

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Charlotte, NC, with Democratic Presidential candidate former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. Upon arrival, they traveled to the Charlotte Convention Center. Later, they traveled to the Midwood Smokehouse restaurant, where they ordered barbecue and met with patrons. Then, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

July 6

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, also in the Oval Office, he had a telephone conversation with President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia to discuss President Putin's June 20 meeting with President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan and President Serzh Sargsian of Armenia regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, including the need to intensify diplomatic efforts to achieve a comprehensive settlement, and review the situations in Syria and Ukraine.

The White House announced further details on the President's travel to Warsaw, Poland, from July 7 through 9 and Spain from July 9 through 11.

July 7

In the morning, the President traveled to Warsaw, Poland, arriving early the following morning. While en route aboard Air Force One, he posted an entry to his Facebook feed on the deaths of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile, who were killed by police officers in Baton Rouge, LA, on July 5, and Falcon Heights, MN, on July 6, respectively, and his hopes to work constructively with law enforcement and community leaders to build trust and improve relations between police and the people they serve.

The President announced his intention to nominate Kimberly J. Walker to be Inspector General at the Export-Import Bank of the U.S.

The President announced his intention to nominate John M. Huff, Robert P. Suglia, and Lori K. Wing-Heier to be members of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers.

The President announced his intention to appoint Babette Ceccotti as a member of the Advisory Committee to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Terry Guen, Dorothy T. Lippert, and

Jordan E. Tannenbaum as members of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

The President announced his intention to appoint John E. Frank as a member of the Committee for the Preservation of the White House.

The President announced his intention to appoint Richard Kidd IV as Executive Director of the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council.

The President announced his intention to appoint John P. Abizaid and Mary B. DeRosa as members of the President's Intelligence Advisory Board.

The President announced the appointment of Sylvia Trimble Bozeman and John T. Cacioppo as members of the President's Committee on the National Medal of Science.

July 8

In the morning, upon arrival in Warsaw, Poland, the President traveled to the Warsaw Marriott Hotel. Later, at the hotel, he was briefed by members of his national security team on the shooting of law enforcement officers at a public demonstration in Dallas, TX, on July 7. Then, he had a telephone conversation with Mayor Michael S. Rawlings of Dallas to discuss the July 7 shooting and offer his condolences on behalf of the Nation for the five police officers killed in the shooting: Lorne Ahrens, Michael Krol, Patrick Zamarripa, Michael J. Smith, and Brent Thompson. Later, also at the Marriott, in Baltic Ballroom 1, he met with Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

In the afternoon, in the Grand Ballroom at the Warsaw Marriott Hotel, the President met with U.S. Embassy personnel and their families. Then, he traveled to the PGE National Stadium in Warsaw, where he met with President Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai and Chief Executive Officer Abdullah Abdullah of Afghanistan to discuss U.S. troop levels in Afghanistan, continued U.S. and NATO support of Afghan security forces, and ongoing reconciliation efforts. Later, also at the PGE National Stadium, he participated in a family photograph with NATO leaders. Then, also at the PGE National Stadium, he attended a session of the North Atlantic Council. Awaiting the start of the session, he met briefly with Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom.

In the evening, the President returned to the Warsaw Marriott Hotel. Later, he traveled to the Presidential Palace in Warsaw, where, in the Hetman Room, he participated in a family photograph with NATO leaders, followed by a working dinner in the Column Hall. Then, he returned to the Warsaw Marriott Hotel, where he remained overnight.

Also in the evening, the President had separate telephone conversations with Chief David O. Brown of the Dallas, TX, Police Department and Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch to receive updates on the ongoing investigation into the shooting in Dallas. The President also offered his condolences to Chief Brown for the five police officers killed in the shooting.

During the day, the President received regular updates on the shootings in Dallas, TX.

The White House announced that following his travel to Madrid and Rota, Spain, on July 9, the President will return to Washington, DC, on July 10, rather than traveling to Seville, Spain, as previously scheduled. The White House also announced that he will travel to Dallas, TX, early the following week.

July 9

In the morning, the President traveled to PGE National Stadium, where he attended a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) leaders' meeting on Afghanistan. Secretary of Defense Ashton B. Carter, National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice, U.S. Permanent Representative to NATO Douglas E. Lute, and National Security Council (NSC) Senior Director for South Asia Peter R. Lavoy also attended.

In the afternoon, also at the PGE National Stadium, the President attended a working session with North Atlantic Council leaders. Secretary Carter, National Security Adviser Rice, Ambassador Lute, NSC Senior Director for European Affairs Charles A. Kupchan, and Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Victoria Nuland also attended. Then, on the sidelines of the NATO summit,

the President met with Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany to discuss the future relationship between the United Kingdom and European Union, the migration crisis affecting Europe, and ongoing diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Later, also on the sidelines of the NATO summit, he met with Prime Minister Alexios Tsipras to discuss the progress Greece has made in addressing its economic challenges, including the importance of implementing further economic reforms and U.S. support for meaningful debt relief; underscore the value of Greece's cooperation with Turkey to reduce irregular migration flows; encourage longer term U.S.-Greece defense cooperation; and note U.S. support for negotiations with Cyprus.

Later in the afternoon, at the PGE National Stadium, the President joined a NATO-Ukraine Commission meeting in progress. Then, also at the PGE National Stadium, he met with Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom, Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany, Prime Minister Matteo Renzi of Italy, President François Hollande of France, and President Petro Poroshenko of Ukraine and participated in a photo opportunity.

In the evening, the President traveled to Madrid, Spain. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had a telephone conversation with Gov. Gregory W. Abbott of Texas to offer his condolences for the five police officers who were killed in the shooting at a public demonstration in Dallas, TX, on July 7: Lorne Ahrens, Michael Krol, Patrick Zamarripa, Michael J. Smith, and Brent Thompson. Upon arrival at Torrejon Air Base, he was greeted by King Felipe VI of Spain and other Spanish and U.S. officials. Then, he traveled to the U.S. Chief of Mission's residence, where he remained overnight.

July 10

In the morning, the President traveled to the Palacio Real.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to the Hotel InterContinental Madrid, where he visited with U.S. Embassy personnel and their families. Then, he returned to the U.S. Chief of Mission's residence. Later, he traveled to Torrejon Air Base, where, in a hangar, he met with members of Spanish opposition parties to discuss developments in Spanish and European politics, Spain-U.S. relations, and the importance of continued cooperation on shared security challenges. Participating in the meeting were Pedro Sanchez, secretary general of the Partido Socialista Obrero Espanol; Albert Rivera, president of Ciudadanos; and Pablo Iglesias, secretary general of Podemos. Then, the President traveled to Rota, Spain, where, at Naval Station Rota, he toured the USS *Ross* destroyer with Cmdr. Russell Caldwell, USN, commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Dallas, TX, on July 12, and, at the invitation of Mayor Michael S. Rawlings of Dallas, will make remarks at an interfaith memorial service at the Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center.

July 11

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Roosevelt Room, the President and Vice President Joe Biden met with law enforcement leaders representing chiefs, sheriffs, and rank-and-file officers across the country to thank them for their service, express condolences for colleagues lost in the line of duty, review best practices for building trust between law enforcement and communities, and discuss implementation of the reforms recommended by the President's Task Force on 21st-Century Policing.

In the evening, the President posted an entry to his Facebook feed on the July 7 shooting in Dallas, TX, and his hopes to work constructively with law enforcement and community leaders to build trust and improve relations between police and the people they serve.

During the day, the President reviewed remarks drafted for the upcoming memorial service on behalf of the five officers killed in the July 7 shooting in Dallas: Lorne Ahrens, Michael

Krol, Patrick Zamarripa, Michael J. Smith, and Brent Thompson.

The White House announced that the President will convene a meeting with law enforcement leaders, academics, civil rights activists, and community leaders at the White House on July 13.

The White House announced further details on the President's presentation of the Medal of Honor to Lt. Col. Charles S. Kettles, USA (Ret.), for conspicuous gallantry during the Vietnam war, on July 18.

July 12

In the morning, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to Dallas, TX, arriving in the afternoon. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had separate telephone conversations with family members of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile, who were killed by police officers in Baton Rouge, LA, on July 5, and Falcon Heights, MN, on July 6, respectively, to offer his and Mrs. Obama's condolences on behalf of the Nation for the death of their loved ones. Also aboard Air Force One, he met with Sen. Edward R. "Ted" Cruz, who accompanied the President to Dallas.

In the afternoon, at the Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center, prior to his remarks at the memorial service, the President and Mrs. Obama visited with former President George W. Bush and Mrs. Bush. Later, also at the center, he and Mrs. Obama visited with injured police officers representing the Dallas Police Department, Dallas Area Rapid Transit, and El Centro College, and families of the officers killed in the July 7 shooting. Vice President Joe Biden, Mrs. Biden, former President Bush, and Mrs. Bush also attended. Later, the President and Mrs. Obama returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

July 13

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The President announced his intention to nominate Constance Smith Barker to be a Commissioner on the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jannette Lake Dates to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

The President announced his intention to nominate Mary Ellen Barbera and John D. Minton, Jr., to be members of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute.

The President announced his intention to nominate Joseph R. Donovan, Jr., to be Ambassador to Indonesia.

The President announced his intention to nominate Benjamin "Pepón" Osorio to be a member of the National Council on the Arts.

The President announced his intention to nominate John A. Herrera to be a member of the National Credit Union Administration Board.

The President announced his intention to nominate Grant T. Harris to be a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace.

The President announced his intention to appoint David Chard, Larry Hedges, and Jeannie Oakes as members of the National Board for Education Sciences.

The President announced his intention to appoint Michael B. Filler as a member of the National Council on Federal Labor-Management Relations.

The President announced his intention to appoint Cindy Simon Skjodt as a member of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

July 14

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Also in the morning, he had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Theresa May of the United Kingdom to congratulate her on her selection as Prime Minister, reiterate the lasting importance of the special relationship between the U.K. and U.S., and offered U.S. support as the Prime Minister undertakes a smooth, orderly, and transparent negotiation over its exit from the European Union.

In the afternoon, at the Studio Theatre, following the taping of ABC's "The President and the People: A National Conversation" town

hall meeting, the President visited briefly with Erica Garner, daughter of Eric Garner, who died during an attempted arrest by New York City police officers on July 17, 2014.

In the evening, the President was briefed by his national security team on the terrorist attack at a Bastille Day celebration in Nice, France.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Enrique Peña Nieto of Mexico to the White House on July 15.

The White House announced that the President will welcome the 2015 World Series Champion Kansas City Royals to the White House on July 21.

The President announced his intention to nominate C. Peter Mahurin, Michael McWherter, and Joe H. Ritch to be members of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

The President declared a major disaster in Oklahoma and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area affected by severe storms and flooding from June 11 through 13.

July 15

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President had a telephone conversation with President François Hollande of France to offer his condolences for the terrorist attack at a Bastille Day celebration in Nice, France, pledge U.S. support and assistance as French authorities pursue an investigation, and reiterate the crucial importance of France-U.S. cooperation in the Global Coalition To Counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

In the evening, the President had a telephone conversation with Secretary of State John F. Kerry to discuss the political situation in Turkey, including the need for all parties to support the democratically elected Government, show restraint, and avoid any violence. Secretary Kerry underscored the State Department's continuing focus on the safety and security of U.S. citizens in Turkey.

During the day, the President received a briefing from his national security team on the unfolding situation in Turkey.

July 16

In the morning, the President had a conference call with his national security and broader foreign policy team to discuss the situation in Turkey. He was briefed on the most recent developments on the ground and reiterated U.S. support for the democratically elected, civilian Government of Turkey. He also discussed efforts to maintain the safety and well-being of diplomatic missions and personnel, U.S. servicemembers, and their dependents; the need for all parties in Turkey to act within the rule of law; and the importance of continued Turkey-U.S. security and counterterrorism cooperation.

July 17

In the morning, the President was briefed by Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch on the shooting of law enforcement officers in Baton Rouge, LA.

In the afternoon, the President had separate telephone conversations with Gov. John Bel Edwards of Louisiana and Mayor-President Melvin L. "Kip" Holden of Baton Rouge, LA, to discuss the investigation into the shooting of law enforcement officers in Baton Rouge, offer Federal support in the investigation, and express his condolences on behalf of the Nation to the families of the officers who were killed: Montrell Jackson, Matthew Gerald, and Brad Garafola.

July 18

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

During the day, the President had separate telephone conversations with Chief Carl Dabadie, Jr., of the Baton Rouge, LA, Police Department and Sheriff Sid J. Gautreaux III of East Baton Rouge Parish to express his condolences for the July 17 shooting of law enforcement officers in Baton Rouge and offer Federal support in the ongoing investigation. He also had separate telephone conversations with Tonja Garafola, Dechia Gerald, and Trenisha

Jackson, respective wives of East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Deputy Brad Garafola and Baton Rouge Police Department officers Matthew Gerald and Montrell Jackson, who were killed in the shooting. During the calls, he offered his and Mrs. Obama's condolences on behalf of the Nation.

July 19

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had a telephone conversation with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey to discuss the failed coup attempt against the Government of Turkey. The President strongly condemned the action, expressed his support for Turkish democracy, and lauded the Turkish people's resolve. He further urged that the investigation and prosecution of the coup's perpetrators be conducted in ways that reinforce public confidence in democratic institutions and the rule of law and offered U.S. assistance in the investigation. They also discussed the status of Fethullah Gülen, a Turkish citizen living in exile in Saylorsburg, PA, whose followers were blamed by President Erdogan for the coup attempt.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Secretary of Defense Ashton B. Carter.

July 20

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Secretary of State John F. Kerry.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with Gov. Ricard L. Scott of Florida to discuss the Florida Department of Health's announcement of a suspected case of mosquito transmission of the Zika virus, which would be the first such case documented in the continental U.S. The President recognized Florida's strong record of responding to outbreaks of mosquito-borne viruses and offered continued Federal support for Florida's ongoing case investigation and Zika preparedness efforts.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore and his wife Ho Ching to the White House for an official visit and state dinner on August 2.

July 21

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Atlanta, GA, on August 1.

July 22

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with President Enrique Peña Nieto of Mexico.

In the afternoon, the President was briefed by Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa O. Monaco on the shootings in Munich, Germany. Later, in the Oval Office and Old Family Dining Room, he recorded an interview with John Dickerson of CBS's "Face the Nation" program for later broadcast.

In the evening, the President had a telephone conversation with Sen. Timothy M. Kaine to discuss Democratic Presidential candidate former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton's selection of Sen. Kaine as her Vice Presidential running mate.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the Inauguration of Pedro Pablo Kuczynski Godard as President of Peru in Lima, Peru, on July 28:

Michael B. Froman (head of delegation);
Brian A. Nichols;
William R. Brownfield;
Joseph P. DiSalvo; and
Mari del Carmen Aponte.

July 25

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Secretary of the Treasury Jacob J. Lew. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary of Defense Ashton B. Carter.

In the evening, the President reviewed drafts of his prepared remarks for the Demo-

cratic National Convention in Philadelphia, PA, on July 27.

During the day, in the Cross Hall, the President greeted wounded U.S. servicemembers and their families.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Philadelphia, PA, on July 27.

July 26

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, on the Oval Office Patio and in the Map Room, the President recorded an interview with Savannah Guthrie of NBC's "Today" program for later broadcast.

July 27

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Then, he had a telephone conversation with Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany to express his condolences on behalf of the United States for the victims of recent terrorist and other violent attacks in southern Germany, offer U.S. support as the investigations into the attacks proceed, reaffirm the necessity of close U.S.-German counterterrorism and security cooperation, and discuss the situation in Ukraine, including the importance of ending the violence in eastern Ukraine and fully implementing the Minsk agreements. Also in the morning, he reviewed drafts of his prepared remarks for the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia, PA, later that day.

In the evening, the President received an update from his Deputy Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Adviser Amy Pope on the potential non–travel related cases of Zika virus announced by the Florida Department of Health earlier that day, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention coordination with Florida, and Federal support and technical assistance for Florida's ongoing case investigation and mosquito control efforts. Later, he traveled to Philadelphia, PA. While en route aboard Air Force One, he watched Vice President Joe Biden's televised remarks at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia. Later, at the Wells Fargo Center in Philadelphia, following his convention remarks, the President visited backstage with Democratic Presidential candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton, members of her family, and Democratic Vice Presidential nominee Sen. Timothy M. Kaine.

Later in the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC, arriving early the following morning.

July 28

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Situation Room, the President met with his counterterrorism and homeland security teams as part of the administration's regular review of threats posed by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Al Qaida, and other terrorist organizations to the U.S. homeland, U.S. persons overseas, and our allies and partners. Noting the recent attacks in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia, the President stressed the importance of remaining vigilant in defense of the homeland, increasing battlefield pressure on ISIL and other terrorist groups, and continuing to combat terrorist recruitment, radicalization, and mobilization efforts. The President was also updated on security preparations and U.S. support to Brazil in advance of the upcoming Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, including efforts to prevent the spread of the Zika virus. Later, in the Grand Foyer and East Room, he met with departing White House interns and participated in a question-and-answer session.

July 29

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing, which included an update on the four non–travel related cases of Zika virus announced by the Florida Department of Health on July 27.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Secretary of State John F. Kerry.

July 30

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Camp David, MD, where he remained overnight.

July 31

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

August 1

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Atlanta, GA.

In the afternoon, upon arrival in Atlanta, the President traveled to the Hyatt Regency Atlanta hotel. Later, at a private residence, he attended a Democratic National Committee roundtable fundraiser. Then, he returned to Washington, DC.

August 2

In the morning, in the Map Room, the President and Mrs. Obama recorded a video to promote the 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in which they quizzed each other on their favorite Olympic sports and memories and wished success to Team U.S.A. Later, in the Oval Office, he met with Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore. Vice President Joe Biden also attended.

In the evening, on the North Portico, the President and Mrs. Obama greeted Prime Minister Lee and his wife Ho Ching upon their arrival for a state dinner and reception. Then, on the Grand Staircase, he and Mrs. Obama participated in an official photograph with Prime Minister Lee and Ms. Ho.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential Delegation to attend the opening ceremony of the 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on August 5:

John F. Kerry (head of delegation);
Liliana Ayalde;
Mari del Carmen Aponte;
Elizabeth M. Allen;
Ellie S. Schafer; and
Mark Spitz.

August 3

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, on the South Lawn, the President recorded an interview with David Feherty of Golf Channel for later broadcast.

The President declared a major disaster in Montana and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area affected by a tornado on June 11.

August 4

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch. Later, they traveled to the Pentagon in Arlington, VA, where, in Meeting Room 869, they met with the National Security Council to discuss U.S. strategy to counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

In the evening, the President and Vice President Biden returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the Inauguration of Danilo Medina Sanchez as President of the Dominican Republic in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, on August 16: Thomas E. Perez (head of delegation); James W. Brewster, Jr.; and Mari del Carmen Aponte.

The President announced his intention to appoint Luis G. Hoyos as a member of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Jackie Richter-Menge as a member of the Arctic Research Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint James G. Featherstone as a member of the Medal of Valor Review Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint George S. Hawkins as a member of the National Infrastructure Advisory Council.

The President announced his intention to appoint Laurence M. Baer and Eric A. LeVine as members of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

August 5

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

August 6

In the afternoon, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to Chilmark, MA. Upon arrival, they traveled to their vacation residence, where they remained overnight.

August 7

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Oak Bluffs, MA, where, at the Farm Neck Golf Club, he played golf with Chris Paul, T. Cy Walker, and White House Deputy Director for Political Strategy and Outreach Joseph B. Paulsen.

In the evening, the President returned to his vacation residence in Chilmark, MA. Later, he and Mrs. Obama traveled to Oak Bluffs, where, at the Down Island restaurant, they had dinner with family and friends. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Chilmark, where they remained overnight.

August 8

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Oak Bluffs, MA. Later, he returned to his vacation residence in Chilmark, MA, where he remained overnight.

August 9

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to Edgartown, MA. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Chilmark, MA.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to West Tisbury, MA. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Chilmark, where they remained overnight.

The White House announced that the President will host the 2016 White House Tribal Nations Conference on September 26.

The President declared a major disaster in Wisconsin and ordered Federal aid to supplement State, tribal, and local recovery efforts in the area affected by severe storms and flooding on July 11 and 12.

August 10

In the morning, the President traveled to Edgartown, MA.

In the afternoon, the President returned to his vacation residence in Chilmark, MA, where he remained overnight.

The White House announced that President will attend a fundraiser for the Democratic National Committee at a private residence in Chilmark, MA, on August 15.

August 11

In the morning, the President and his daughter Malia went for a short walk on a trail near their vacation residence.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Vineyard Haven, MA. Later, he returned to his vacation residence in Chilmark, MA.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to Edgartown, MA, where, at Détente Restaurant, they had dinner with friends. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Chilmark, where they remained overnight.

The White House announced that the President will participate in the second U.S.-Africa Business Forum, hosted by the U.S. Department of Commerce and Bloomberg Philanthropies, in New York City on September 21.

August 12

In the morning, the President traveled to Oak Bluffs, MA.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to Edgartown, MA, where they visited the home of Robert Wolf, founder and chief executive officer of 32 Advisors, and his wife Carol.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to l'étoile restaurant. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Chilmark, MA, where they remained overnight.

The White House announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the closing ceremony of the 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on August 21:

Regina McCarthy (head of delegation);
Liliana Ayalde;
Eric K. Fanning;
Bess Evans;
Lauren Kelly;
Jason Collins; and
Jackie Joyner-Kersee.

August 13

In the afternoon, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to Edgartown, MA. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Chilmark, MA.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to Edgartown. Then, they traveled to Oak Bluffs, MA. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Chilmark, where they remained overnight.

August 14

In the morning, the President traveled to Oak Bluffs, MA. Also in the morning, he was briefed by White House Senior Adviser Valerie B. Jarrett on the situation in Milwaukee, WI.

In the afternoon, the President returned to his vacation residence in Chilmark, MA.

In the evening, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to Oak Bluffs. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Chilmark, where they remained overnight. Also in the evening, he had a telephone conversation with Gov. John Bel Edwards of Louisiana to discuss Gov. Edwards's request for an emergency declaration in Louisiana following severe storms and flooding and confirm Federal support for the State's ongoing recovery efforts.

During the day, the President was briefed by Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa O. Monaco on the widespread flooding in southern Louisiana.

The President declared a major disaster in Louisiana and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area affected by severe storms and flooding beginning on August 11 and continuing.

August 15

In the morning, the President traveled to Edgartown, MA.

In the afternoon, the President returned to his vacation residence in Chilmark, MA. Later, he traveled to a private residence in Chilmark, where he attended a fundraiser for 2016 Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton.

In the evening, the President returned to his vacation residence in Chilmark, where he remained overnight.

August 17

In the morning, the President traveled to Edgartown, MA. Also in the morning, he had a telephone conversation with Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator W. Craig Fugate, who updated him on the ongoing Federal disaster assistance and response and recovery efforts to support residents in the areas affected by the flooding in Louisiana.

In the evening, the President returned to his vacation residence in Chilmark, MA. Then, he and Mrs. Obama traveled to Oak Bluffs, MA. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Chilmark, where they remained overnight.

August 18

In the morning, the President traveled to Oak Bluffs, MA.

In the afternoon, the President returned to his vacation residence in Chilmark, MA.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to Vineyard Haven, MA. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Chilmark, where they remained overnight.

The White House announced that the President will travel to China and Laos from September 2 through 9.

August 19

In the morning, the President received an update from Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh C. Johnson on the ongoing flood response and recovery efforts in Baton Rouge, LA, and discuss the President's plans to travel to the affected area in order to assess the situation and the continuing need for Federal assistance.

In the evening, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to the vacation residence of White House Senior Adviser Valerie B. Jarrett in Oak Bluffs, MA, where they watched the annual Oak Bluffs fireworks display. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Chilmark, MA, where they remained overnight.

August 20

In the afternoon, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha spent time at the beach with friends. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Chilmark, MA.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to Chesca's Restaurant in Edgartown, MA, where they had dinner. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Chilmark, where they remained overnight.

The White House released further details on the President's return to Washington, DC, on August 21.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Baton Rouge, LA, on August 23.

August 21

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Oak Bluffs, MA. Later, he returned to his vacation residence in Chilmark, MA.

In the evening, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha returned to Washington, DC.

August 22

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch. Then, in the Roosevelt Room, he attended Vice President Biden's meeting with President Luis Guillermo Solis Rivera of Costa Rica to discuss regional security, governance, and migration issues, as well as Costa Rica-U.S. environmental, counternarcotics, and security cooperation.

The White House released further details on the President's travel to Baton Rouge, LA, on August 23.

August 23

In the morning, the President traveled to Baton Rouge, LA.

In the afternoon, upon arrival in Baton Rouge, the President traveled to Zachary, LA, where he toured flood-damaged areas and met with residents. He was joined by Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator W. Craig Fugate, Gov. John Bel Edwards of Louisiana, Sens. David B. Vitter and William M. Cassidy, Reps. Cedric L. Richmond and Garret Graves, and Mayor-President Melvin L. "Kip" Holden of Baton Rouge.

Later in the afternoon, the President visited a disaster recovery center established at the Zachary Men's Club and met with volunteers. Then, he traveled to Baton Rouge Metropolitan Airport, where, in the Chief's Office, he met with the families of East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Deputy Brad Garafola and Baton Rouge Police Department officers Matthew Gerald and Montrell Jackson, who were killed in the July 17 shooting of law enforcement officers in Baton Rouge. Then, in the Training Room, he met with the family of Alton Sterling, who was fatally shot by police officers in Baton Rouge on July 5. Then, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

August 24

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Then, also in the Oval Office, he had a telephone conversation with President Sergio Mattarella of Italy to offer his condolences on behalf of the American people following the earthquake that struck central Italy overnight, commend the work of first responders, and offer U.S. assistance in the recovery efforts.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President had a telephone conversation with President Juan Manuel Santos Calderon of Colombia to congratulate him on finalizing key details of a peace agreement with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and offer continued U.S. support for strengthening Colombia's institutions. They also discussed Colombia-U.S. cooperation in combating organized crime and narcotics trafficking.

During the day, in the Outer Oval Office, the President watched a virtual reality video he recorded at Yosemite National Park on June 18 with Park Superintendent Don Neubacher.

August 25

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Rose Garden, he participated in a group photograph with members of the White House National Park Service team.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Secretary of Defense Ashton B. Carter.

August 26

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Bethesda, MD, where, at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, he visited with wounded servicemembers. Then, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President declared a major disaster in Kentucky and ordered Federal aid to supplement Commonwealth and local recovery efforts in the area affected by severe storms, tornadoes, flooding, landslides, and mudslides from July 2 through 9.

August 28

In the afternoon, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to Prince William Forest Park in Triangle, VA, where they hiked. Later, they returned to Washington, DC.

August 29

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch. Later, in the Roosevelt Room, the President recorded an interview with Fareed Zakaria of CNN's "Fareed Zakaria GPS" program for later broadcast.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Lake Tahoe, NV, on August 31.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Honolulu, HI, from August 31 through September 2.

August 30

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Secretary of Health and Human Services Sylvia Mathews Burwell.

August 31

In the morning, the President traveled to Reno, NV, arriving in the afternoon. Upon arrival, he traveled to South Lake Tahoe, CA. Then, he traveled to Stateline, NV.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Honolulu, HI.

In the evening, the President traveled to the Morimoto restaurant, where he had dinner with family and friends. Later, he traveled to a private residence in Kailua, HI, where he remained overnight.

The President announced the appointment of the following individuals as members of the Financial Oversight and Management Board for Puerto Rico:

Andrew G. Biggs;
Jose B. Carrión III;
Carlos M. Garcia;
Arthur J. Gonzalez;
José R. González;
Ana J. Matosantos; and
David A. Skeel, Jr.

September 1

In the morning, the President traveled to Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, HI, where, in the living room of the Presidential Cottage, he recorded an interview with Mark Landler and Coral Davenport of the New York Times for later broadcast online. Later, he traveled to Midway Atoll, as part of his visit to the newly expanded Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had a telephone conversation with Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator W. Craig

Fugate to discuss hurricane preparedness efforts in Florida and Hawaii and the mobilization of Federal resources in support of local efforts.

In the afternoon, the President toured Midway Atoll with Marine National Monuments Superintendent Matt Brown. Then, near North Beach, he recorded an interview with Craig Welch and explorer-in-residence Sylvia A. Earle of National Geographic for later broadcast. Then, on the porch of the Clipper House, he recorded an interview with Julie Hirschfeld Davis of the New York Times for later broadcast online. Later, he snorkeled off the coast of the Atoll with friends and viewed some of the 250 species of invertebrates and fish that surround Midway.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to Honolulu, HI, arriving in the evening.

In the evening, the President traveled to a private residence in Kailua, HI, where he remained overnight.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the canonization of Mother Teresa in the Holy See (Vatican City) on September 4:

Lisa O. Monaco (head of delegation);
Kenneth Hackett;
Suzy George;
Donna J. Markham; and
Carolyn Y. Woo.

September 2

In the morning, the President traveled to Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, HI. Then, he returned to the private residence in Kailua, HI. Later, he traveled to Hangzhou, China, arriving the following afternoon.

The White House announced that the President will meet with Prime Minister Theresa May of the United Kingdom on the margins of the Group of Twenty (G–20) nations meeting in Hangzhou, China, on September 4.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the opening ceremony of the 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on September 7:

Sylvia Mathews Burwell (head of delegation);
Liliana Ayalde;
Claudia L. Gordon;
William Reynolds III; and
Bonnie St. John.

September 3

In the afternoon, upon arrival in Hangzhou, China, the President traveled to the JW Marriott Hotel Hangzhou. Later, in Ballroom C of the JW Marriott, he visited with U.S. Embassy personnel and their families. Then, he traveled to West Lake State Guest House.

In the evening, in Ming Yuan Hall at the West Lake State Guest House, the President participated in an expanded bilateral meeting with President Xi Jinping of China, followed by a restricted bilateral meeting with President Xi in the Huai Hu Room. Later, in the Banquet Hall, he attended a working dinner with President Xi. Following the meetings, he and President Xi walked the grounds of the Guest House, discussed exercise routines, the history of the Guest House, and the design of the pagodas, and stopped for tea. Then, the President returned to the JW Marriott hotel, where he remained overnight.

September 4

In the afternoon, the President traveled to the Hangzhou Olympic and International Expo Center, where, in the VIP Welcome Hall, he participated in a family photograph with leaders attending the Group of Twenty (G–20) nations summit, followed by the opening ceremony of the G–20 summit in the Main Meeting Hall. Later, also in the Main Meeting Hall, he attended the first working session of the summit.

In the evening, the President traveled to the Zhejiang Xizi Hotel Hangzhou, where, in the Xizi Hall, he attended a welcome reception and participated in a family photograph in the outdoor courtyard. Then, in the Banquet Hall, he attended a dinner hosted by President Xi Jinping of China and his wife Peng Liyuan for G–20 leaders and spouses. Later, he took a boat ride on West Lake, where he and other G–20 leaders and spouses attended a gala

performance. Then, he returned to the JW Marriot Hotel Hangzhou, where he remained overnight.

September 5

In the morning, the President traveled to Hangzhou Olympic and International Expo Center, where, in the Main Meeting Hall, he participated in the second session of the G–20 summit. Then, on the margins of the G–20 summit, in Room 401, he met with President François Hollande of France and Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany to discuss the situation in Ukraine.

In the afternoon, also at the Expo Center, on the margins of the G–20 summit, the President met with President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia to discuss the situations in Syria and Ukraine. Then, in the Main Meeting Hall at the Expo Center, he participated in the third session of the summit, followed by the fourth session, a working lunch in the Rooftop Banquet Hall. Later, in the Main Meeting Hall, he participated in the fifth session of the G–20 summit, followed by the closing ceremony.

In the evening, the President returned to the JW Marriott Hotel Hangzhou. Later, he traveled to Vientiane, Laos. Upon arrival, he traveled to the Landmark Mekong Riverside Hotel in Vientiane, where he remained overnight.

September 6

In the morning, the President traveled to the Presidential Palace, where he participated in an arrival ceremony with President Bounnyang Vorachit of Laos. Then, in the Dok Boua Joom Room, he had a bilateral meeting with President Bounnyang.

In the afternoon, the President returned to the Landmark Mekong Riverside Hotel. Later, he traveled to Lao National Cultural Hall. Then, he returned to the Landmark hotel, where he visited with U.S. Embassy personnel and their families and remained overnight.

The President announced the nomination of Abid Riaz Qureshi to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

September 7

In the morning, the President traveled to the Cooperative Orthotic and Prosthetic Enterprise (COPE) Visitor Centre in Vientiane, where he toured the facility with COPE Visitor Centre manager Soksai Sengvong Kham and signed the guest book. Later, he traveled to Luang Prabang, Laos.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to, Wat Xieng Thong Buddhist temple, where he toured the temple and viewed the grounds with Luang Prabang National Museum Deputy Director of Foreign Affairs Vanpheng Keopannha. While at the temple, he recorded an interview with Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Benjamin J. Rhodes for later online broadcast. Then, he traveled to Souphanouvong University. While en route, he stopped to greet local residents and visit neighborhood vendors and food stalls along the Mekong River. Then, at the university, he met with civil society members of the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI).

Later in the afternoon, the President returned to the Landmark Mekong Riverside Hotel in Vientiane.

In the evening, the President traveled to the National Convention Centre, where he met with President Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines. Then, in the Gala Dinner Hall at the National Convention Centre, he attended a gala dinner for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit leaders and participated in an official group photograph. Later, he returned to the Landmark hotel, where he remained overnight.

The President announced the appointment of H.T. Nguyen as a member of the National Council on Federal Labor-Management Relations.

The President announced the appointment of Martha G. Abbott as a member of the National Security Education Board.

September 8

In the morning, the President traveled to the National Convention Centre. Then, he participated in a group photograph with Lower

Mekong Initiative (LMI) leaders. Later, in Room 2, he attended an East Asia Summit (EAS) leaders meeting.

In the afternoon, in the main lobby of the National Convention Centre, the President participated in an official photograph with EAS leaders. Then, he returned to the Landmark Mekong Riverside Hotel, where he met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India to discuss India-U.S. relations, bilateral cooperation in implementing the Paris Agreement on climate change, and U.S. support for India's membership bid to join the Nuclear Suppliers Group. Later, he traveled to Yokota Air Base, Japan, arriving early the following morning. While en route aboard Air Force One, he was briefed by National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice on a reported recent nuclear test by North Korea. Also aboard Air Force One, he had separate telephone conversations with President Park Geun-hye of South Korea and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan to reiterate the U.S. commitment to the defense of South Korea and Japan and pledge his continued consultation with both leaders to ensure that North Korea's actions are met with a strong international response.

The President made additional disaster assistance available to Louisiana by authorizing an increase in the level of Federal funding for Public Assistance projects undertaken as a result of severe storms and flooding that occurred from August 11 through 31.

September 9

In the morning, the President traveled to Anchorage, AK, arriving in the afternoon.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Philadelphia, PA, on September 13.

The White House announced that the President will travel to New York City on September 13.

The President announced his intention to nominate David J. Arroyo to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert G. Taub to be a Commissioner on the Postal Regulatory Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Matthew L. Wiener to be Chairman of the Council of the Administrative Conference of the United States.

The President announced his intention to designate Dan Cnossen and James A. "Sandy" Winnefeld to be members of the Board of Visitors to the U.S. Naval Academy.

September 11

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President observed a moment of silence to mark the 15th anniversary of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Then, he traveled to Arlington, VA. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

In the afternoon, the President and his daughter Malia traveled to Great Falls National Park in McLean, VA. Later, they returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

September 12

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Roosevelt Room, he dropped by a meeting between Secretary of Health and Human Services Sylvia Mathews Burwell, Senior Adviser Valerie B. Jarrett, and Deputy Chief of Staff for Implementation Kristie A. Canegallo and leaders of insurance companies participating in the health insurance marketplace to discuss the 2017 open enrollment period.

The White House announced that the President will welcome Prime Minister Matteo Renzi of Italy to the White House on October 18.

September 13

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing, followed by a meeting with Secretary of State John F. Kerry. Also in the morning, in the Roosevelt Room, the President recorded a video conversation with Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Jason L. Furman to discuss the U.S. Census Bureau's release of 2015 data on income, poverty, and health insurance in the U.S.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Philadelphia, PA. Later, he traveled to the Sonesta Philadelphia Rittenhouse Square hotel, where, in the Cassatt Room, he recorded separate radio interviews by telephone with Frankie Darcell of WMXD in Detroit, MI, and Philadelphia, PA, and Rick Party and Benji Brown of WHQT in Miami, FL. Then, in the Warhol Room, he attended a Democratic National Committee roundtable fundraiser. Later, he traveled to New York City, where, following a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee fundraiser at a private residence, he met with outgoing New York City Police Commissioner William J. Bratton and Commissioner-designate James P. O'Neill to congratulate Commissioner Bratton on his retirement and Commissioner-designate O'Neill on his new position, thank them for their service, and extend best wishes for their next steps.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Christopher A. Coons and Ronald H. Johnson to be Representatives of the United States to the 71st Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

The President announced his intention to nominate Valerie Biden Owens and Cynthia Ryan to be Alternate Representatives of the United States to the 71st Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

The President announced the nomination of Diane Gujarati to be a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York.

September 14

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch. Later, in the Oval Office, the President met with Secretary of the Treasury Jacob J. Lew.

In the evening, the President, Mrs. Obama, their daughters Malia and Sasha, and Mrs. Obama's mother Marian Robinson toured the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

The White House announced that the President will award the 2015 National Medal of Arts and National Humanities Medal on September 22.

September 15

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the evening, at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, prior to delivering remarks at the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Annual Awards Gala, the President met backstage with Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton.

September 16

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had a telephone conversation with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan of Abu Dhabi, Deputy Supreme Commander of the United Arab Emirates Armed Forces, to discuss the situations in Syria and Yemen, efforts to combat the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Al Qaida terrorist organizations in Syria, the importance of stabilizing areas of Iraq liberated from ISIL, the upcoming U.N. Summit for Refugees and Migrants, efforts to address climate change, and United Arab Emirates-U.S. relations.

In the afternoon, in the Situation Room, the President met with the National Security Council to discuss the situations in Iraq and Syria and efforts to combat the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization. Later, in the Oval Office, he participated in a credentialing ceremony for newly appointed Ambassadors to the U.S.

The White House announced that the President will travel to New York City on September 18.

The President announced his intention to nominate Elizabeth A. Field to be Inspector General of the Office of Personnel Management.

The President announced his intention to nominate Tina S. Kaidanow to be Assistant

Secretary for Political-Military Affairs at the Department of State.

The President announced his intention to nominate Markos Kounalakis to be a member of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy.

The President announced his intention to nominate Justin H. Siberell to be Coordinator for Counterterrorism, with the rank of Ambassador at Large, at the Department of State.

The President announced his intention to nominate Claudia Slacik to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank of the U.S.

The President announced his intention to nominate Gail O'Connor Mellow and Dana A. Williams to be members of the National Council on the Humanities.

The President announced his intention to appoint Jeremy A. Sabloff as Chairman and member of the Cultural Property Advisory Committee at the Department of State.

The President announced his intention to appoint Adele Chatfield-Taylor, Shannon Keller O'Loughlin, and James K. Reap as members of the Cultural Property Advisory Committee at the Department of State.

The President announced his intention to appoint W. Kent Fuchs and Julia M. Phillips as members of the National Science Board for the National Science Foundation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Renee M. Johnson as a member of the National Council on Federal Labor-Management Relations.

The President announced his intention to appoint Rami Nashashibi as a member of the President's Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

The President declared a major disaster in Maryland and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area affected by a severe storm and flooding on July 30 and 31.

September 17

In the evening, outside Hall D at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, the President visited with Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton following her remarks at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation's Phoenix Awards dinner. Also in the evening, he was briefed on the explosion in the Chelsea neighborhood of New York City. He also had a telephone conversation with Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo of New York to discuss the explosion and the ensuing investigation and thank the State's first responders for their swift reaction to the incident.

September 18

In the afternoon, the President traveled to New York City.

In the evening, the President traveled to the Lotte New York Palace hotel, where he remained overnight.

During the day, the President received periodic updates on the investigation into the September 17 bombing in the Chelsea neighborhood of New York City. He also had separate telephone conversations with Mayor Bill de Blasio of New York City and Gov. Christopher J. Christie of New Jersey to discuss the bombings in New York City and Seaside Park, NJ, and the recovered pipe bombs in Elizabeth, NJ, and the ensuing investigations.

The White House announced that the President will meet with Premier Li Keqiang of China on the margins of the U.N. General Assembly in New York City on September 19.

The White House announced that the President will meet with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on the margins of the U.N. General Assembly in New York City on September 21.

September 19

In the morning, the President received a briefing from Federal Bureau of Investigation Director James B. Comey, Jr., on the ongoing investigation into the bombings in New York City and Seaside Park, NJ, and the recovered pipe bombs in Elizabeth, NJ. Later, the President had a telephone conversation with President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya to discuss U.S.-Kenya relations; review the objectives of the Leaders' Summit on Refugees and the U.S.-Africa Business Forum; commend efforts to improve long-term conditions for refugees in Kenya; and underscore the importance of

securing the entry into force of the Paris Agreement on climate change, holding peaceful, free, and fair elections in Kenya in 2017, and continuing the fight against the al-Shabaab terrorist organization.

Later in the morning, the President attended a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee roundtable fundraiser.

In the afternoon, the President returned to the Lotte New York Palace hotel. Later, in the Holmes I room of the hotel, the President met with Premier Li Keqiang of China to discuss China-U.S. relations; condemn North Korea's September 9 nuclear test; evaluate China's transition toward a more sustainable, consumption-driven economic growth model; review China-U.S. trade relations; and pledge continued work toward bringing the Paris Agreement on climate change into force as early as possible, reaching a market-based measure to reduce international aviation emissions, and strengthening the international humanitarian system, including pressing refugee issues. Later, the President traveled to the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, where, in the Main Auditorium, he visited with Mission staff. Secretary of State John F. Kerry and U.S. Permanent Representative to the U.N. Samantha Power also attended.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to the Cosme restaurant, where they had dinner. Later, they returned to the Lotte New York Palace hotel, where they remained overnight.

During the day, the President had separate telephone conversations with Officers Angel Padilla and Peter Hammer of the Linden, NJ, Police Department, who were injured during the apprehension of the suspect in the September 17 bombings in New York and New Jersey, Ahmad Khan Rahami, on September 19. He also spoke with Ofc. Jason Falconer of the Avon, MN, Police Department, who, although off duty at the time, subdued the suspect in the St. Cloud, MN, mall stabbings, Dahir Ahmed Adan, on September 17. He commended the bravery and selflessness of all three officers and offered his gratitude on behalf of the Nation for their heroic actions.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Babyn Yar Massacre in Kiev, Ukraine, on September 29:

Penny S. Pritzker (head of delegation);
Marie L. Yovanovitch;
Charles A. Kupchan;
Tom A. Bernstein; and
Yehiel Poupko.

September 20

In the morning, the President traveled to United Nations Headquarters.

In the afternoon, in the Office of the President of the Assembly at U.N. Headquarters, the President held a courtesy call with President of the U.N. General Assembly Peter Thomson. Then, in the Office of the Secretary-General, he held a courtesy call with U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. Later, in the Economic and Social Council Chamber, he participated in a family photograph with leaders attending the Leaders' Summit on Refugees. Then, he returned to the Lotte New York Palace hotel.

During the day, on the margins of the U.N. General Assembly, the President met with Prime Minister Malcolm B. Turnbull of Australia to discuss Australia-U.S. relations, humanitarian cooperation, and efforts to combat the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization.

In the evening, in the Villard Ballroom at the Lotte New York Palace hotel, the President attended and made remarks at a reception for foreign heads of delegations to the U.N. General Assembly. He remained overnight at the Lotte New York Palace hotel.

September 21

In the morning, the President traveled to the Plaza hotel. Later, he returned to the Lotte New York Palace hotel.

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Obama returned to Washington, DC. Also in the afternoon, he had separate telephone conversations with Mayor Dewey F. Bartlett, Jr., of Tulsa, OK, and Mayor Jennifer W. Roberts of

Charlotte, NC, to discuss the deaths of Terence Crutcher in Tulsa on September 16 and Keith L. Scott in Charlotte on September 20 and the related protests in their respective cities. The President expressed his condolences to both mayors for the tragic events, affirmed the Federal commitment to provide assistance as needed, and reiterated that any protests should be conducted in a peaceful manner and that local law enforcement should find ways to calmly and productively engage those protesting.

During the day, the President received updates on the situations in Tulsa and Charlotte from Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch and White House Senior Adviser Valerie B. Jarrett.

The White House announced that the President will welcome 2015 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Champion Kyle T. Busch and his team members to the White House on September 28.

September 22

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, at the Greensboro Interactive Lunch Counter at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African American History and Culture, the President and Mrs. Obama recorded an interview with Robin Roberts of ABC's "Good Morning America" program for later broadcast. Then, in the Modern Civil Rights Gallery, he continued the interview with Ms. Roberts. Also in the afternoon, he had a telephone conversation with Gov. Patrick L. McCrory of North Carolina to discuss the fatal shooting of Keith L. Scott by police officers in Charlotte, NC, on September 20, the resulting protests and civil unrest in Charlotte, and the efforts of local law enforcement to contain the unrest.

The White House announced that the President will host the White House Tribal Nations Conference on September 26.

The White House announced that the President and Mrs. Obama will welcome the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Teams to the White House to honor their participation and success in the Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on September 29.

The President announced his intention to nominate Tulinabo Salama Mushingi to be Ambassador to Senegal and Guinea-Bissau.

The President announced his intention to nominate N. Bruce Duthu to be a member of the National Council on the Humanities.

The President announced his intention to nominate Wilfredo Martinez and Chase Rogers to be members of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute.

The President announced his intention to appoint Victoria Reggie Kennedy, Charles B. Ortner, and Susan S. Sher as General Trustees on the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The President announced his intention to appoint Kenneth W. Mack as a member of the Permanent Committee for the Oliver Wendell Holmes Devise.

The President announced his intention to appoint Eugenio Piñeiro-Soler as a U.S. Commissioner on the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas.

The President announced his intention to appoint Sonia Tower as a member of the Advisory Committee on the Arts for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The President announced his intention to designate E. Elliott "Skip" Barker and Matice J. Wright as members of the Board of Visitors to the U.S. Naval Academy.

September 23

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with White House Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest to discuss H.R. 5325, which would fund the operations of the Federal Government and give public health professionals the resources needed to fight the Zika virus. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with Secretary of Defense Ashton B. Carter.

During the day, in the Oval Office, the President met with Brendan Cox, husband of the late Jo Cox, the British Member of Parliament who was killed after a meeting with her constituents in Birstall, United Kingdom, on June 16.

The President thanked Mr. Cox and his family for her selfless service to others and reaffirmed their shared commitment to carry on the legacy of her work.

In the evening, in the Eisenhower Theater at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the President and Mrs. Obama attended a special performance in celebration of the opening of the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

September 26

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium, the President participated in a traditional blanketing ceremony as part of the 2016 White House Tribal Nations Conference.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Fort Lee, VA, on September 28.

September 27

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, at a private residence, the President attended a joint, roundtable fundraiser for Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton and the Democratic National Committee.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Annandale, VA, on September 30.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jeffrey DeLaurentis to be Ambassador to Cuba.

The President announced the nomination of Julie R. Breslow, Deborah J. Israel, and Carmen Guerricagoitia McLean to be judges on the Superior Court for the District of Columbia.

September 28

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Fort Lee, VA, where, in the Clark Fitness Center, he participated in a town hall meeting and question-and-answer session with Active Duty U.S. servicemembers and veterans hosted by CNN, which was recorded for later broadcast.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

During the day, the President recorded a telephone interview with Steve Harvey of the "The Steve Harvey Morning Show" for later broadcast.

The White House announced that the President will lead the delegation to attend the memorial service for former President Shimon Peres of Israel in Jerusalem on September 29.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Jerusalem on September 29.

The President announced his intention to nominate Brent F. Nelsen to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

The President announced his intention to nominate Glenn A. Fine to be Inspector General at the Department of Defense.

The President announced his intention to nominate Virginia Johnson and Sylvia Orozco to be members of the National Council on the Arts.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jane M. Doggett and Diane S. Harris to be members of the National Council on the Humanities.

The President declared a major disaster in Florida and ordered Federal aid to supplement State, tribal, and local recovery efforts in the area affected by Hurricane Hermine from August 31 through September 11.

September 29

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany to discuss implementation of the Minsk agreements, urge the parties in the Ukraine conflict to abide by the cease-fire, and condemn the Russian and Syrian regime airstrikes on eastern Aleppo, Syria.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Jerusalem, arriving the following morning.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the state funeral of former President Shimon Peres in Tel Aviv, Israel, on September 30:

Barack Obama (head of delegation);
William J. Clinton;
Daniel Shapiro;
John F. Kerry;
Robert P. Casey, Jr.;
Nancy Pelosi;
Steny H. Hoyer;
Janice D Schakowsky;
Charles B. Rangel;
Sander M. Levin;
Eliot L. Engel;
Ileana Ros-Lehtinen;
Jerrold L. Nadler;
Kay Granger;
Susan A. Davis;
Steven J. Israel;
Adam B. Schiff;
Steve Cohen;
Theodore E. Deutch;
David N. Cicilline;
Suzanne Bonamici;
Alan S. Lowenthal;
Lee M. Zeldin;
Susan E. Rice;
Benjamin J. Rhodes;
Jeffrey D. Zients;
Robert Malley;
Frank G. Lowenstein;
Yael Lempert;
Stephen J. Hadley;
Martin S. Indyk;
Stuart E. Eizenstat; and
Alan P. Solow.

September 30

In the morning, following the memorial service for former President Shimon Peres of Israel, the President attended a private ceremony at Israel's national cemetery, Mount Herzl, in Jerusalem.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President declared a major disaster in Iowa and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area affected by severe storms, straight-line winds, and flooding from August 23 through 27.

The White House announced that the President will welcome the 2016 Stanley Cup Champion Pittsburgh Penguins to the White House on October 6.

October 1

During the day, the President received a briefing on the storm path of Hurricane Matthew and related preparedness efforts, including pre-positioned relief supplies for affected Caribbean nations, and will receive updates as the storm develops.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Tampa, FL, on October 5.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Miami, FL, on October 5.

October 3

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the East Wing and on the South Lawn, the President visited with participants in the White House South by South Lawn Festival and viewed exhibits.

October 4

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Also in the morning, the President received an update from Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa O. Monaco on Hurricane Matthew, related preparedness efforts undertaken by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the potential impact on Caribbean nations.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Biden met with Secretary of Defense Ashton B. Carter.

The White House announced that the President will postpone his scheduled travel to Tampa and Miami, FL, on October 5 due to the expected landfall of Hurricane Matthew.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Chicago, IL, from October 7 through 9.

October 5

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with White House Senior Adviser Brian C. Deese to congratulate him on the first day of the implementation of the Paris Agreement on climate change. Then, in the Doctor's Office, he recorded radio interviews with Zenja Dunn of KOAS in Las Vegas, NV, Patty Jackson of WDAS in Philadelphia, PA, Felisha Monet of WEDR in Miami, FL, and syndicated radio host Rickey Smiley, as well as programs aired on WUSL in Philadelphia, PA, and WJLB in Detroit, MI, all for later broadcast.

October 6

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Also in the morning, he was updated on the preparations underway to respond to the likely landfall of Hurricane Matthew.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch. Later, on the South Lawn, the President dropped by a "Let's Move!" event hosted by Mrs. Obama with schoolchildren from around the country to celebrate the fall harvest of the White House Kitchen Garden, visited with guests, and participated in a photo opportunity.

During the day, the President had telephone conversations with Gov. J. Nathan Deal of Georgia, Gov. Nikki R. Haley of South Carolina, Gov. Patrick L. McCrory of North Carolina, and Gov. Richard L. Scott of Florida to discuss preparations ahead of Hurricane Matthew's impending landfall, urge safe evacuation of all affected residents, and offer Federal assistance.

The White House announced further details on the President's welcoming of Prime Minister Matteo Renzi of Italy to the White House on October 18.

The President announced his intention to appoint L. Wayne Brasure as Director for Domestic Nuclear Detection at the Department of Homeland Security.

The President announced his intention to appoint Peter V.D. Emerson as a member of the President's Commission on White House Fellowships.

The President announced his intention to appoint Robert D. Alverson as a U.S. Commissioner on the International Pacific Halibut Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Victor R. McCrary and Emilio F. Moran as members of the National Science Board for the National Science Foundation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Philip Anderson as a U.S. Commissioner on the Pacific Salmon Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council:

Susan Levine;
Elliot J. Schrage;
Irvin Shapell;
Howard Unger; and
Clemantine Wamariya.

The President declared an emergency in Florida and ordered Federal aid to supplement State, tribal, and local response efforts due to the emergency conditions resulting from Hurricane Matthew beginning on October 3 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Hawaii and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area affected by severe storms, flooding, landslides, and mudslides from September 11 through 14.

The President declared an emergency in South Carolina and ordered Federal aid to supplement State, tribal, and local response efforts due to the emergency conditions resulting from Hurricane Matthew beginning on October 4 and continuing.

The President declared an emergency in Georgia and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local response efforts due to the emergency conditions resulting from Hurricane Matthew beginning on October 4 and continuing.

October 7

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he

traveled to Chicago, IL, arriving in the afternoon.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners Building at 69 W. Washington Street, where he greeted poll workers and cast his ballot for the November 8 general election. Then, he traveled to a private residence, where he attended a Democratic National Committee roundtable fundraiser. Later, also at the private residence, he recorded a promotional video for Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton's campaign organization to encourage early voting ahead of the November 8 general election.

In the evening, the President traveled to his Hyde Park-Kenwood residence. Later, he traveled to Sepia restaurant, where he met with friends and Barack Obama Foundation supporters working on plans for siting the Obama Presidential Center in Chicago. Then, he traveled to Swift & Sons restaurant, where he had dinner with friends and supporters to continue discussing future plans for his Foundation, including the library and related programming. Later, he returned to his Hyde Park-Kenwood residence, where he remained overnight.

Also in the evening, the President had a telephone conversation with President Juan Manuel Santos Calderon of Colombia to congratulate him on being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work to end the longest conflict in the Western Hemisphere and reiterate U.S. support for the peace process as President Santos pursues a national dialogue on continued negotiations.

During the day, the President received regular updates from Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa O. Monaco on Hurricane Matthew and the expected impact on southeastern States.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Pittsburgh, PA, on October 13.

The President declared an emergency in North Carolina and ordered Federal aid to supplement State, tribal, and local response efforts due to the emergency conditions resulting from Hurricane Matthew beginning on October 4 and continuing.

October 8

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator W. Craig Fugate to receive an update on the storm path of Hurricane Matthew and the plans for a Federal response. He also had telephone conversations with Gov. J. Nathan Deal of Georgia, Gov. Nikki R. Haley of South Carolina, Gov. Patrick L. McCrory of North Carolina, and Gov. Richard L. Scott of Florida to discuss preparations ahead of Hurricane Matthew's impending landfall, urge safe evacuation of all affected residents, and offer Federal assistance. Later, he traveled to Olympia Fields, IL.

In the afternoon, the President returned to his Hyde Park-Kenwood residence in Chicago, IL. While en route, he stopped to visit with friends Eleanor Kaye Wilson and her husband Wellington Wilson.

During the day, the President received regular updates from Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa O. Monaco on Hurricane Matthew and the expected impact on southeastern States.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Greensboro, NC, on October 11.

October 9

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

During the day, the President continued to receive regular updates from Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa O. Monaco on Hurricane Matthew.

The President declared a major disaster in Florida and ordered Federal aid to supplement State, tribal, and local recovery efforts in the area affected by Hurricane Matthew beginning on October 3 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Georgia and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area affected by Hurricane Matthew beginning on October 4 and continuing.

October 10

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator W. Craig Fugate and Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa O. Monaco to receive the latest updates on the impact of Hurricane Matthew and ongoing Federal response efforts.

The White House announced further details on the President's travel to Pittsburgh, PA, on October 13.

The President declared a major disaster in North Carolina and ordered Federal aid to supplement State, tribal, and local recovery efforts in the area affected by Hurricane Matthew beginning on October 4 and continuing.

October 11

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Greensboro, NC, where, in the Alumni Conference Room of the Alumni-Foundation Event Center at North Carolina A&T State University, he met with several "My Brother's Keeper" initiative participants. Then, in the Middle Ballroom of the Alumni-Foundation Event Center, he participated in a town hall meeting and question-and-answer session hosted by ESPN.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with Gov. Patrick L. McCrory of North Carolina to discuss the ongoing response to Hurricane Matthew and the flooding across the State. The President reiterated that all necessary Federal resources would be directed to help North Carolina and other impacted States respond effectively to the storm and expressed his condolences to the families and friends of those who lost their lives in the storm and all those who have been affected.

Also during the day, he was briefed by Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa O. Monaco on the impact of Hurricane Matthew and ongoing Federal response and recovery efforts underway in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Columbus, OH, on October 13.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Cleveland, OH, on October 13 and 14.

The President declared a major disaster in South Carolina and ordered Federal aid to supplement State, tribal, and local recovery efforts in the area affected by Hurricane Matthew beginning on October 4 and continuing.

October 12

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Doctor's Office, the President recorded separate radio interviews with Sam Sylk of WZAK in Cleveland, OH, James Thomas, Jr., of WHQT in Miami, FL, and Keith "Papa Keith" Walcott of WMIB in Miami.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch. Later, in the Green Room, the President visited with Nevada home health care worker Roxana Giron, who introduced him before his remarks at a Hispanic Heritage Month reception. Then, in the East Room, he attended and delivered remarks at the reception.

October 13

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Pittsburgh, PA. Later, he traveled to the University of Pittsburgh, where, at Alumni Hall, he toured projects presented at the White House Frontiers Conference with Chancellor Patrick Gallagher and visited with exhibitors. Later, he traveled to Carnegie Mellon University, where, following his remarks and a panel discussion at the Jared L. Cohon University Center, he recorded a sketch in the McConomy Auditorium with Stephen T. Colbert of CBS's "The Late Show With Stephen Colbert" for later broadcast.

In the evening, the President traveled to Columbus, OH. Later, he traveled to Cleveland, OH. Upon arrival, he traveled to the Hilton Downtown Cleveland hotel, where he remained overnight.

The White House announced that the President will visit Benjamin Banneker Academic High School on October 17.

October 14

In the afternoon, in the Flight Viewing Lounge at the Cleveland Burke Lakefront Airport, the President recorded an interview with Peter Hamby of Snapchat for later broadcast. Then, he returned to Washington, DC.

Later in the afternoon, in the Situation Room, the President met with his National Security Council to receive an update on efforts to combat the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization in Iraq and Syria.

In the evening, on the South Lawn, the President and Mrs. Obama hosted a reception for White House staffers to thank them for their service.

The President announced his intention to appoint Meghan Flanz as Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The President announced his intention to appoint Carla A. Harris as Chairperson of the National Women's Business Council.

The President announced his intention to appoint H. Fisk Johnson and Mark Tercek as members of the Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations.

The President announced his intention to appoint Joshua B. Bolten and Stuart Levey as members of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

October 17

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Miami, FL, on October 20.

October 18

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President met with Prime Minister Matteo Renzi of Italy. Vice President Joe Biden also attended.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President had a telephone conversation with Secretary-General–designate António Manuel de Oliveira Guterres of the United Nations to congratulate him on his recent election and affirm that the U.S. will work closely with him when he assumes leadership of the United Nations on January 1, 2017. The President pledged continued U.S. assistance on a wide array of global challenges, including climate change, forced migration, sustainable development, nonproliferation, humanitarian assistance, conflict prevention, peacekeeping, and human rights. He also stressed the importance of U.N. reform efforts, including ensuring effective and accountable peacekeeping and strengthening and modernizing U.N. institutions.

In the evening, on the North Portico, the President and Mrs. Obama greeted Prime Minister Matteo Renzi of Italy and his wife Agnese Landini upon their arrival for a state dinner and reception. Then, on the Grand Staircase, he and Mrs. Obama participated in an official photograph with Prime Minister Renzi and Ms. Landini.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the Inauguration of Jorge Carlos Fonseca as President of Cabo Verde in Praia, Cabo Verde, on October 20: Linda Thomas-Greenfield (head of delegation); and Donald L. Heflin.

October 19

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Then, in the Doctor's Office, he recorded separate telephone interviews with Karen Clarke and Brian Dawson of WQOK, WFXC, and WNNL in Raleigh, NC, Olympia "Olympia D" Dicks of WOSF in Charlotte, NC, and Anjali "Queen B" McGuire of WBTP in Tampa, FL.

October 20

In the morning, the President traveled to Miami, FL, arriving in the afternoon. While en route aboard Air Force One, he met with Senior Presidential Speechwriter Stephen A. Krupin to discuss his remarks on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to be delivered later in the morning at Miami Dade College.

In the afternoon, in Room 3208 of the Conference Center at Miami Dade College, the President recorded a comedy sketch and interview with Samantha Bee of TBS's "Full Frontal With Samantha Bee" program for later broadcast.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to Miami Gardens, FL. Later, he traveled to Miami Beach, FL, where, at a private residence, he attended a Democratic Governors Association roundtable fundraiser.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Las Vegas, NV, on October 23.

The President declared a major disaster in Kansas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area affected by severe storms and flooding from September 2 through 12.

The President declared a major disaster in Wisconsin and ordered Federal aid to supplement State, tribal, and local recovery efforts in the area affected by severe storms, flooding, and mudslides on September 21 and 22.

October 21

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with actor and comedian Bill Murray, recipient of the Mark Twain Prize for American Humor. During the meeting, they recorded a video to promote enrollment in health insurance plans offered through the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act marketplace. Later, also in the Oval office, he met with White House Kids Science Advisers program participants.

In the evening, in the East Room, the President and Mrs. Obama hosted a private party.

The White House announced that the President will travel to San Diego, CA, on October 23, and Los Angeles, CA, on October 24.

The President announced his intention to nominate Richard Stengel to be a member and Chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

The President announced his intention to appoint Tam O'Shaughnessy and Amanda Wright Lane as members of the Advisory Board of the National Air and Space Museum.

The President announced his intention to appoint Susan Hayman as a member of the Board of Visitors to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

The President announced his intention to appoint Jacob Horowitz, Jim St. Germain, and Francisco A. Villarruel as members of the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

The President announced his intention to appoint Tawara D. Goode and Rebecca S. Salon as members of the President's Committee for People With Intellectual Disabilities.

October 23

In the afternoon, the President traveled to North Las Vegas, NV.

In the evening, the President traveled to San Diego, CA. Later, he traveled to the Hilton La Jolla Torrey Pines hotel in La Jolla, CA, where he remained overnight.

October 24

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Los Angeles, CA, where, at the El Capitan Entertainment Center, he recorded an interview with Jimmy Kimmel of ABC's "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" program for later broadcast. Later, he traveled to Beverly Hills, CA, where, at a private residence, he attended a roundtable fundraiser for Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton and the Democratic National Committee.

In the evening, the President traveled to the residence of White House decorator Michael S. Smith, partner of U.S. Ambassador to Spain James Costos, where he visited with friends. Later, he traveled to the W Los Angeles-West

Beverly Hills hotel in Los Angeles, CA, where he remained overnight.

October 25

In the morning, the President traveled to Beverly Hills, CA, where, at a private residence, he attended a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee roundtable fundraiser.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Orlando, FL, on October 28.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Greece from November 14 through 17, Germany on November 17 and 18, and Peru from November 18 through 21.

October 26

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey to discuss the ongoing campaign against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization, Turkey's role supporting local Syrian forces in clearing ISIL from Turkey's border in northwest Syria, continuing coordination in combating ISIL in Syria, and the importance of denying safe haven to the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) insurgent group in northern Iraq.

October 27

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had lunch.

October 28

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Orlando, FL.

In the evening, in Room 1046 of the CFE Arena, following his remarks at a campaign event for Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton, the President recorded separate interviews with YouTube creators Elizabeth Koshy, Lia Marie Johnson, and Adande "Swoozie" Thorne. Later, he returned to Washington, DC. Prior to departure from Orlando International Airport, aboard Air Force One, he visited briefly with Aerosmith lead singer Steven Tyler and lead guitarist Joe Perry.

During the day, in the Oval Office, the President visited with Abraham Lincoln interpreter Richard "Fritz" Klein of Springfield, IL.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Columbus, OH, on November 1.

The President announced his intention to appoint Robert L. Morgan as a member of the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Toni L. Griffin and Alex Krieger as members of the Commission of Fine Arts.

The President announced his intention to appoint Jacqueline K. Barton and Anne Case as members of the President's Committee on the National Medal of Science.

The President announced his intention to appoint Merrill Friedman as a member of the President's Committee for People With Intellectual Disabilities.

The President announced his intention to appoint Reuben Brigety as a member of the National Security Education Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Gene Shawcroft as a member of the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission.

The President announced his intention to designate Christine Fox as a member of the Board of Visitors to the U.S. Naval Academy.

October 31

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch. Later, on the South Portico, he and Mrs. Obama greeted local schoolchildren and children of U.S. servicemembers trick-or-treating at the White House for Halloween.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Raleigh, NC, on November 2.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Miami, FL, on November 2 and 3.

November 1

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Roosevelt Room, the President recorded an interview with Bill Maher of HBO's "Real Time With Bill Maher" program for later broadcast. Later, he traveled to Columbus, OH.

In the evening, in Conference Room 232 of the Field House at Capital University, the President recorded separate radio interviews with Willie Moore, Jr., of the "Willie Moore Jr. Show," and Thomas Joyner, Sybil Wilkes, and Damon Williams of the "Tom Joyner Morning Show," both for later broadcast. Then, in Classroom 203, also at the Field House, he recorded an interview with Versha Sharma of NowThis News for later broadcast. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Jacksonville, FL, on November 3.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Charlotte, NC, on November 4.

The President declared a major disaster in Iowa and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area affected by severe storms and flooding from September 21 through October 3.

November 2

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Then, in the Doctor's Office, he recorded separate radio interviews with Shilynne Cole of WQMG in Greensboro, NC, and Monica May of WCFB in Orlando, FL, both for later broadcast.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Raleigh, NC. Upon arrival, he traveled to the Eddie Smith Field House at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where, in the Team Room, he recorded an interview with Gina Rodriguez of MiTú for later online broadcast. Then, also at the Field House, in the Director's Office, he recorded several brief "get out the vote" promotional videos for the mobile application Snapchat and the video streaming service Spotify. Later, he traveled to Miami, FL.

In the evening, upon arrival in Miami, the President traveled to Miami Beach, FL, where, at a private residence, he met with friends and supporters to discuss plans for the Barack Obama Foundation. Later, he traveled to the InterContinental Miami hotel, where he remained overnight.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Fayetteville, NC, on November 4.

The President declared a major disaster in Virginia and ordered Federal aid to supplement Commonwealth and local recovery efforts in the area affected by Hurricane Matthew beginning on October 7 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Minnesota and ordered Federal aid to supplement State, tribal, and local recovery efforts in the area affected by severe storms and flooding from September 21 through 24.

November 3

In the afternoon, in the Team Room of the FIU Arena at Florida International University, the President recorded separate radio interviews with Artie Goins of WBAV in Charlotte, NC, Erica DeLong, Brody Smith, and Nicole Weaver of WDCG's "Bob & the Showgram" program in Raleigh, NC, and John Monds of the "Love and R&B With John Monds" program, all for later broadcast. Later, he traveled to Jacksonville, FL.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had a telephone conversation with Manager Joseph J. Maddon of Major League Baseball's Chicago Cubs to congratulate him on his team's victory in the World Series.

The President announced his intention to appoint Leonard A. Forsman as a member and Vice Chair of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Linda Behnken as a U.S. Commissioner on the U.S. International Pacific Halibut Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Beth White as a member of the National Capital Planning Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Donna Darm and Charles O. Swanton as U.S. Commissioners on the Pacific Salmon Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Earl A. Powell III and Elizabeth K. Meyer as members of the Commission of Fine Arts.

The President announced his intention to appoint Charles D. Brower and Gregory Siekaniec as Commissioners of the U.S. Section of the U.S.-Russia Polar Bear Commission.

November 4

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Fayetteville, NC. While en route aboard Air Force One, he participated in an interview with David Remnick, editor of the New Yorker magazine. Upon arrival, he traveled to Fayetteville State University, where, in the Dance Studio at the Felton J. Capel Arena, he recorded an interview with Alfred C. Sharpton, Jr., of MSNBC's "PoliticsNation With Al Sharpton" program for later broadcast. Later, he traveled to Charlotte, NC.

In the evening, while en route to the Charlotte Douglas International Airport, the President continued his interview with David Remnick of the New Yorker. Then, he returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President will welcome the National Basketball Association Champion Cleveland Cavaliers to the White House on November 10.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Orlando, FL, on November 6.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Durham, NH, on November 7.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Philadelphia, PA, on November 7.

November 6

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Kissimmee, FL. Following his remarks at Osceola County Stadium, he met briefly with J.J. Holmes, a 12-year-old boy with cerebral palsy who had been removed from a Donald J. Trump Presidential campaign rally in Tampa, FL, on November 5 for protesting on behalf of people with disabilities. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Ann Arbor, MI, on November 7.

November 7

In the morning, the President traveled to Ann Arbor, MI.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Durham, NH.

In the evening, the President traveled to Philadelphia, PA. Later, he and Mrs. Obama returned to Washington, DC.

November 8

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Map Room, he recorded an election-night video message with BuzzFeed News for later broadcast. Then, in the Doctor's Office, he recorded separate telephone interviews with Frankie Darcell of WMXD in Detroit, MI, and WDAS in Philadelphia, PA; syndicated radio show host Jana Sutter; Cheryl "Cappuchino" Haygen of WUSL in Philadelphia; Joel "Java Joel" Murphy of WAKS in Cleveland, OH; Estee Martin, Lil Shawn, and Marc "DJ Nailz" Dixon of WPYO in Orlando, FL; and Mike Adam of WZMP in Philadelphia.

Also in the morning, the President played basketball with friends and staff members.

In the afternoon, in the East Room, the President met with departing White House interns and participated in a question-and-answer session.

In the evening, at the Residence, the President monitored Presidential and congressional election returns.

November 9

Early in the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President-elect Donald J. Trump to congratulate him on his election victory. He also had a separate telephone conversation with Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton to commend her on the strong campaign she waged throughout the country.

Later in the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Also in the Oval Office, the President and White House Chief of Staff Denis R. McDonough met with several staff members to discuss the results of the elections.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch. Later, in the Oval Office, the President participated in an interview with Jann Wenner of Rolling Stone magazine.

In the evening, in the Grand Foyer, the President hosted a group of former and current Cabinet members to thank them for their service.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President-elect Trump to the White House on November 10 to discuss planning for the transition in order to ensure a smooth process between administrations.

November 10

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Diplomatic Reception Room, the President and Mrs. Obama welcomed President-elect Donald J. Trump and his wife Melania Trump.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Alex Myteberi, a 6-year-old boy from Scarsdale, NY, who offered to share his house with Syrian refugees in need of shelter, about whom the President had spoken in his remarks at the Leaders' Summit on Refugees in New York City on September 20. Alex's mother Valbona Myteberi also attended.

November 11

In the morning, in the State Dining Room, the President hosted a breakfast to honor veterans and their families on the observance of Veterans Day. Also in the morning, in the Oval Office, he participated in an interview with David Remnick, editor of the New Yorker magazine. Later, he traveled to Arlington, VA, where, at Arlington National Cemetery, he participated in a wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in commemoration of Veterans Day.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC. Later, in the Oval Office, he continued his interview with David Remnick of the New Yorker.

November 14

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had a telephone conversation with President Enrique Peña Nieto of Mexico to discuss Mexico-U.S. economic relations, migration issues, combating organized crime, strengthening the rule of law, and efforts to solidify Mexico-U.S. relations and institutionalize mechanisms of cooperation.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had lunch.

In the evening, the President traveled to Athens, Greece, arriving the following morning.

November 15

In the morning, upon arrival in Athens, the President traveled to the Arion Resort & Spa, Astir Palace hotel.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to the Presidential Mansion, where he participated in an arrival ceremony with President Prokopios Pavlopoulos of Greece. Then, at the Maximos Mansion, he met with Prime Minister Alexios Tsipras of Greece. Later, he returned to the Arion Resort & Spa, Astir Palace hotel.

In the evening, the President traveled to the Presidential Mansion. Later, he returned to the Arion Resort & Spa, Astir Palace hotel, where he remained overnight.

The President announced the nomination of Rainey Ransom Brandt to be judge on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

November 16

In the morning, the President traveled to the Acropolis complex in Athens, where he toured the ruins with Ephorate of Antiquities of Athens Director Eleni Banou of Greece's Ministry of Culture and Sports.

In the afternoon, in front of the Parthenon at the Acropolis, the President recorded a video interview for the White House Office of Digital Strategy in which he discussed his visit to Greece and the significance of Greece as the birthplace of democracy. Later, he toured the Acropolis Museum with Museum President Dimitrios Pandermalis. Then, he traveled to the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center, where he met with Greek opposition leader Kyriakos Mitsotakis, president of the New Democracy party. Later, he traveled to Berlin, Germany.

In the evening, upon arrival in Berlin, the President traveled to the Hotel Adlon Kempinski, where he had dinner with Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany and remained overnight.

The White House announced that the President will present the Presidential Medal of Freedom on November 22.

November 17

In the morning, the President traveled to the U.S. Embassy, where, in the Ernst Cramer Conference Room, he participated in a joint interview with Sonia Seymour Mikich of the German public television station ARD and Klaus Brinkbäumer of Der Spiegel magazine for later broadcast and publication.

In the afternoon, in the Quadriga Room at the U.S. Embassy, the President had lunch with U.S. Ambassador to Germany John B. Emerson. Then, he returned to the Hotel Adlon Kempinski. Later, he traveled to the German Chancellery, where, in the Chancellor's Private Office, he met with Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany.

In the evening, in the Private Dining Room at the Chancellery, the President and Chancellor Merkel had dinner. Later, he returned to the Hotel Adlon Kempinski, where he remained overnight.

The White House announced that the President will pardon the National Thanksgiving Turkey in the Rose Garden on November 23.

November 18

In the morning, the President traveled to the German Chancellery, where, in the Banquet Room, he met with Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany, President François Hollande of France, Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy Brey of Spain, Prime Minister Matteo Renzi of Italy, and Prime Minister Theresa May of the United Kingdom to discuss common challenges facing the transatlantic community, including the need to stabilize the situations in the Middle East and North Africa, efforts to secure diplomatic resolutions to the conflicts in Syria and eastern Ukraine, and the importance of continued cooperation through NATO and other multilateral institutions. President Obama emphasized the vital role of democratic values in advancing human freedom and progress throughout history and in the future.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Lima, Peru.

In the evening, upon arrival in Lima, the President traveled to the JW Marriott Hotel Lima, where he remained overnight.

The President announced his intention to nominate Seth Harris and Jeffrey R. Moreland to be Directors on the AMTRAK Board of Directors.

The President announced his intention to nominate Rachel A. Meidl to be a member of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board.

The President announced his intention to nominate Michael P. Leary to be Inspector General of the Social Security Administration.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert P. Storch to be Inspector General of the National Security Agency.

The President announced his intention to appoint Victor Santiago Pineda, Shelley Siegel, and Karen Tamley as members of the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Access Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Maxwell Barrows and Ryan Easterly as

members of the President's Committee for People With Intellectual Disabilities.

The President announced his intention to appoint Marvin Johnson and David Walker as members of the Federal Service Impasses Panel, Federal Labor Relations Authority.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the John F. Kennedy Centennial Commission:

Kenneth R. Feinberg;
Elaine R. Jones;
Yo-Yo Ma; and
John B. Kennedy Schlossberg.

The President announced his intention to appoint Clyde Terry as a member of the National Council on Disability, and upon appointment, to designate him as Chairperson.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the National Council on Disability:

Billy W. Altom;
Rabia Belt;
Wendy S. Harbour; and
Benro T. Ogunyipe.

November 19

In the morning, in his suite at the JW Marriott Hotel Lima, the President met with U.S. Ambassador to Peru Brian A. Nichols and his family. Then, he participated in a meet-and-greet event with U.S. Embassy personnel and their families in the Salon San Martin. Later, he traveled to the Lima Convention Centre, where, in the San Borja 2 room, he met with President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski of Peru.

In the afternoon, also at the Lima Convention Centre, in the San Borja 1 room, the President attended a meeting of leaders of Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) nations to discuss continued U.S. support for free trade, its strengthening of ties with the countries in the region, and its need to stay engaged in an increasingly interconnected world. Then, on the second-floor terrace at the Centre, he received an official welcoming to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) leaders' summit by President Kuczynski.

Later in the afternoon, the President traveled to Pontifical Catholic University of Peru. Later, he returned to the JW Marriott hotel.

In the evening, the President traveled to Parque de la Reserva, where he attended the APEC leaders' gala dinner. Later, he returned to the JW Marriott hotel, where he remained overnight.

November 20

In the morning, the President traveled to the Lima Convention Centre, where, in the Lima 2 room, he participated in a retreat session of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) leaders' summit. Also in the morning, on the margins of the APEC leaders summit, he met with President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia to discuss the situations in Ukraine and Syria.

In the afternoon, on the second-floor terrace at the Lima Convention Centre, the President participated in a family photograph with APEC leaders' summit delegates. Later, in the Lima 2 room, he participated in a second retreat session of the APEC leaders' summit, followed by a farewell ceremony. Also in the afternoon, on the margins of the APEC leaders' summit, he met with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan to discuss Japan-U.S. relations and areas of continued cooperation.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC, arriving the following morning.

November 21

The President announced his intention to appoint Fred Eychaner and David M. Rubenstein as General Trustees of the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The President announced his intention to appoint Sam D. Brown, William H. Freeman and Lena L. Kennedy as members of the Advisory Committee on the Arts for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The President announced his intention to appoint Randy L. Erwin as a member of the Federal Salary Council.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the National Museum and Library Services Board:

Sayeed Choudhury;
Luis Herrera;
Homa Naficy;
Tey M. Nunn;
Jane Pickering; and
Beth Takekawa.

The President announced his intention to appoint Sarah Suszczyk and William Valdez as members of the National Council on Federal Labor-Management Relations.

The President announced his intention to appoint Mark Toy as a Commissioner of the Mississippi River Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Sue Lowry as the Federal Commissioner on the Red River Compact Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Anna E. Roosevelt as Alternate Commissioner of the Roosevelt Campobello International Park Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Luis M. Benavides as a member of the U.S. Section of the United States-Mexico Border Health Commission.

November 22

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch.

November 23

In the morning, in the Situation Room, the President met with his national security team to discuss comprehensive domestic and international efforts to protect the U.S. during the holiday season, commend Federal, State, and local authorities for their continued cooperation to ensure public safety, and receive a briefing on recent military operations against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Al Qaida terrorist organizations that targeted key external operations plotters. Later, in the Roosevelt Room, he recorded a video to commemorate World AIDS Day for later broadcast.

In the afternoon, at the Armed Forces Retirement Home, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha helped serve Thanksgiving meals to residents. They were joined by Mrs. Obama's brother Craig M. Robinson, his wife Kelly, and their sons Aaron and Austin.

November 24

During the day, the President had separate telephone conversations with nine deployed U.S. servicemembers from each branch of the Armed Forces to wish them and their families a happy Thanksgiving.

November 26

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with President-elect Donald J. Trump.

November 27

In the evening, the President had a telephone conversation with President-elect Donald J. Trump.

November 28

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Also in the morning, the President was briefed by Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa O. Monaco on the car and knife attack at Ohio State University in Columbus, OH.

In the evening, at the Residence, the President and Vice President Biden had dinner with Senate Minority Leader Harry M. Reid.

November 29

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Later, in the Roosevelt Room, the President met with the 2016–2017 class of White House Fellows to discuss their accomplishments over the past year and thank them for their service.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, MD, where he visited with 13 wounded U.S. Army servicemembers and awarded 12 Purple Heart medals. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate J. Bruce Hamilton to be a member of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board.

The President announced his intention to nominate Patrick K. Nakamura to be a member of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Jeri L. Williams as a member of the Medal of Valor Review Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Phil Fuentes as a member of the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanics.

The President announced his intention to appoint Charles H. Ramsey and Dan Tangherlini as members of the National Infrastructure Advisory Council.

The President announced his intention to appoint Thelma Duggin and David C. Jacobson as members of the Board of Trustees of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council:

Tom A. Bernstein;
David Marchick;
Michael Polsky;
Richard Price; and
Ronald A. Ratner.

November 30

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with Gov. William E. Haslam of Tennessee to express concern for the residents of Tennessee affected by the Chimney Top Fire and recent tornadoes in southeastern Tennessee, express his condolences for the lives lost in the fire, receive an update on the ongoing response efforts, and offer Federal assistance.

The President made additional disaster assistance available to the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians by authorizing an increase in the level of Federal funding for Public Assistance projects undertaken in the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians as a result of severe storms, flooding, and mudslides from December 4 through 6, 2014.

December 1

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President met with Thomas E. Donilon, Chair of the Commission on Enhancing National Cybersecurity, to discuss the Commission's findings and recommendations. Later, in the Green Room, he and Mrs. Obama participated in a photo shoot, followed by an interview in the Red Room with Jess Cagle and Sandra Sobieraj Westfall of People magazine.

The White House announced that the President will travel to MacDill Air Force Base, FL, on December 6.

The President announced his intention to appoint Dave A. Chokshi as a member of the Advisory Group on Prevention, Health Promotion, and Integrative and Public Health.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the Board of Visitors to the U.S. Air Force Academy:

Roel C. Campos;
Linda Garcia Cubero;
B. Alvin Drew;
Judith A. Fedder; and
Edward Rice, Jr.

The President announced his intention to appoint Frederick H. Black, Sr., Jane Holl Lute, and Elizabeth Young McNally as members of the Board of Visitors to the U.S. Military Academy.

The President announced his intention to appoint Mostafa A. El-Sayed and Pedro A.

Sanchez as members of the President's Committee on the National Medal of Science.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee:

Peter Altabefl;
John Donovan;
Steve Smith; and
Jeffrey K. Storey.

December 2

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President posted an entry to his Facebook feed, including a promotional video via Facebook Live, on the beginning of the enrollment period for the Federal health insurance marketplace through healthcare.gov.

The President declared a major disaster in Pennsylvania and ordered Federal aid to supplement Commonwealth and local recovery efforts in the area affected by severe storms and flooding on October 20 and 21.

December 3

The White House announced further details on the President's travel to MacDill Air Force Base, FL, on December 6.

December 4

In the evening, at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the President and Mrs. Obama attended the 2016 Kennedy Center Honors Gala.

December 5

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

The White House announced that the President will meet with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan in Honolulu, HI, on December 27, where he will accompany the Prime Minister on a visit to the USS Arizona Memorial at Pearl Harbor.

December 6

In the morning, the President traveled to Tampa, FL, arriving in the afternoon. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Matteo Renzi of Italy to thank him for his support, discuss the results of Italy's December 4 constitutional referendum, and emphasize the importance of continued Italy-U.S. cooperation and strong bilateral relations.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

In the evening, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister John P. Key of New Zealand to thank him for his support during President Obama's tenure and underscore continued close New Zealand-U.S. relations.

The President announced his intention to nominate Thomas J. Murphy to be Under Secretary for Benefits at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The President announced his intention to nominate Ann D. Begeman to be a member of the Surface Transportation Board.

The President announced his intention to nominate Richard A. Kennedy to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority.

The President announced his intention to nominate Rebecca E. Rapp to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Legal Services Corporation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Jerry M. Hultin and Lisa A. Hallett as members of the American Battle Monuments Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Rebecca Hankins and Naomi L. Nelson as members of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Lee A. Feinstein, Priscilla Levine Kersten, and Jonathan S. Lavine as members of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

December 7

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President had a telephone conversation with President François Hollande of France to express his appreciation for their strong cooperation during President Obama's tenure and France's contribution to a strong and united transatlantic alliance.

The President announced his intention to appoint Jason Glass and Susanna Loeb as members of the Board of Directors of the National Board for Education Sciences.

The President announced his intention to appoint Lesley Israel as a member of the Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad.

The President announced his intention to appoint Sheila Lirio Marcelo and John W. Miller as members of the Library of Congress Trust Fund Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Rickey D. James and Shepard M. Smith as Commissioners of the Mississippi River Commission.

December 8

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the evening, on the State Floor, the President and Mrs. Obama hosted the Congressional Ball.

December 9

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing. Then, also in the Oval Office, he met with 15-year-old Peoria, AZ, resident Nick Wetzel, who visited the White House on a trip sponsored by the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Mr. Wetzel's mother Nancy and brothers Gregory and Stephan also attended.

In the afternoon, in the Diplomatic Reception Room, the President and Mrs. Obama viewed a performance by the Bethune-Cookman University Concert Chorale and participated in a photo opportunity. Later, in the Roosevelt Room, he recorded a video to thank Federal employees for their service.

December 12

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President received an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Roosevelt Room, the President recorded an interview with Trevor Noah of Comedy Central's "The Daily Show" for later broadcast.

December 13

In the morning, in the Situation Room, the President met with the National Security Council to discuss U.S. efforts to counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization, including the Iraqi-led campaign to liberate Mosul, efforts of coalition partners in Northern Syria to isolate Raqqa, and U.S. airstrikes to remove key ISIL leaders and attack planners. They also discussed the situation in Aleppo, Syria, following the military actions of the Syrian regime, backed by Russia and Iran.

December 15

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing. Then, also in the Oval Office, the President had a telephone conversation with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey to express his condolences for those killed and wounded in the December 10 terrorist attacks in Istanbul. They also discussed the situation in Aleppo, Syria; efforts to combat the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization; and Turkey-U.S. relations.

Later in the morning, in the Roosevelt Room, the President dropped by a meeting between National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice and outgoing Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of the United Nations. The President thanked former Secretary-General Ban for his valuable leadership of the U.N. over the past decade. The two leaders also discussed U.S.-U.N accomplishments since 2009, including addressing climate change, preventing and ending armed conflicts, protecting human rights, advancing economic development, reducing inequality, and combating the nuclear and missile threats posed by Iran and North Korea. The President conveyed the importance of the U.S.-U.N. partnership and urged continued U.N. reform efforts.

In the afternoon, in the South Court Auditorium of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building, the President dropped by a screening of the film "Hidden Figures" hosted by Mrs. Obama, where he greeted actors Kevin Costner, Octavia Spencer, Taraji P. Henson, and other cast members. Later, in the Cabinet Room, the President recorded an interview with Steve Inskeep of NPR's "Morning Edition" program for later broadcast.

The White House announced that the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha will travel to Honolulu, HI, on December 16.

The President announced his intention to appoint Gregory S. Fehribach as a member of the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Access Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Dorit D. Straus as a member of the Cultural Property Advisory Committee at the Department of State.

The President announced his intention to appoint Lynne M. Ireland, Mort Sajadian, and Kenneth J. Schutz as members of the National Museum and Library Services Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Debo P. Adegbile and Catherine E. Lhamon as Commissioners of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

The President declared a major disaster in Tennessee and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area affected by wildfires from November 28 through December 9.

December 16

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch. Later, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to Honolulu, HI, arriving in the evening.

In the evening, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to their vacation residence in Kailua, HI, where they remained overnight.

December 17

In the morning, the President traveled to Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, HI.

In the afternoon, the President returned to his vacation residence in Kailua, HI, where he remained overnight.

During the day, the President had an intelligence briefing.

December 18

In the morning, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to Kaneohe, HI, where they hiked the nature trails of the Ho`omaluhia Botanical Garden. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Kailua, HI, where they remained overnight.

During the day, the President had an intelligence briefing.

December 19

In the morning, the President traveled to Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, HI. Later, he returned to his vacation residence in Kailua, HI. Also in the morning, he received a briefing from his national security team on the assassination of Russian Ambassador to Turkey Andrei Gennadyevich Karlov in Ankara, Turkey.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Mid-Pacific Country Club.

In the afternoon, the President returned to his vacation residence.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to Honolulu, HI. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Kailua, where they remained overnight. Also in the evening, the President had a telephone conversation with Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany to offer his condolences on behalf of the United States for the terrorist attack at the Christmas market in Berlin, renew his offer of U.S. assistance, and discuss German-U.S. counterterrorism cooperation.

During the day, the President had an intelligence briefing.

December 20

In the morning, the President traveled to Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, HI. Later, he returned to his vacation residence in Kailua, HI.

In the afternoon, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to Bellows Air Force Station in Waimanalo, HI. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Kailua, where they remained overnight.

During the day, the President had an intelligence briefing.

December 21

In the morning, the President traveled to Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, HI. Later, he returned to his vacation residence in Kailua, HI. Then, he traveled to Kapolei, HI.

In the afternoon, the President returned to his vacation residence in Kailua.

In the evening, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to Buzz's Lanikai restaurant. Later, they returned to their vacation residence, where they remained overnight.

During the day, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The President announced his intention to appoint Reno Keoni Franklin as a member of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the Board of Trustees of the Institute of American Indian and Alaska Native Culture and Arts Development:

Barbara J. Ells;
Princess Daazhraii Johnson;
Beverly Wright Morris; and
C. Matthew Snipp.

The President announced his intention to appoint Randy L. Erwin as a member of the National Council on Federal Labor-Management Relations.

The President made additional disaster assistance available to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands by authorizing an increase in the level of Federal funding for the Commonwealth as a result of Typhoon Soudelor that occurred during the period from August 1 through 3, 2015.

December 22

In the morning, the President traveled to Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, HI. Later, he returned to his vacation residence in Kailua, HI.

In the afternoon, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, where they spent time with friends at an on-base beach. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Kailua, where they remained overnight.

During the day, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The White House announced further details on the President's meeting with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan in Honolulu, HI, on December 27.

December 23

In the morning, the President traveled to Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, HI. Later, he returned to his vacation residence in Kailua, HI. Then, he traveled to Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay.

In the afternoon, the President returned to his vacation residence in Kailua, where he remained overnight.

During the day, the President had an intelligence briefing.

December 24

In the morning, the President traveled to Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, HI. Later, he returned to his vacation residence in Kailua, HI.

In the afternoon, the President and his daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to Honolulu, where they had lunch at Side Street Inn and played a live-action escape room game at Breakout Waikiki. Later, they traveled to Kailua, where, at Island Snow, they purchased shave ice and greeted customers and staff.

In the evening, the President and his daughters Malia and Sasha returned to their vacation

residence. Later, the President had separate telephone conversations with deployed U.S. servicemembers from each branch of the Armed Forces to thank them and their families for their service and sacrifice. He remained at the residence overnight.

During the day, the President had an intelligence briefing.

December 25

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, HI, where they visited with U.S. servicemembers and their families.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama returned to their vacation residence in Kailua, HI, where they remained overnight.

During the day, the President had an intelligence briefing.

December 26

In the morning, the President traveled to Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, HI. Then, he returned to his vacation residence in Kailua, HI. Later, he traveled to the Mid-Pacific Country Club.

In the afternoon, the President returned to his vacation residence.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to Honolulu, HI. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Kailua, where they remained overnight

During the day, the President had an intelligence briefing.

December 27

In the morning, the President traveled to Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, HI. Later, he returned to his vacation residence in Kailua, HI.

Later in the morning, the President traveled to Marine Corps Camp H.M. Smith in Aiea, HI, where, in the Commander's Office, he met with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan. Later, they traveled to Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, where, at the USS Arizona Memorial, they toured memorial sites and honored the deceased with flowers. Then, on Kilo Pier 7/8, they greeted survivors of the December 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor.

In the afternoon, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to Honolulu, HI, where, at Hanauma Bay State Park, they snorkeled with friends. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Kailua, where they remained overnight.

During the day, the President had an intelligence briefing.

December 28

In the morning, the President traveled to Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, HI. Later, he returned to his vacation residence in Kailua, HI. Then, he traveled to Kapolei, HI.

Also in the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President-elect Donald J. Trump to discuss the transition process in order to ensure a smooth and effective transition of power.

In the afternoon, the President returned to his vacation residence in Kailua.

In the evening, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to Honolulu, HI, where they toured the Shangri La Center for Islamic Arts and Cultures. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Kailua, where they remained overnight.

During the day, the President had an intelligence briefing.

December 29

In the morning, the President traveled to Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, HI. Later, he returned to his vacation residence in Kailua, HI.

Later in the morning, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to Bellows Air Force Station in Waimanalo, HI.

In the afternoon, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha returned to their vacation residence in Kailua.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Obama traveled to Waikiki, HI. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Kailua, where they remained overnight.

During the day, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The President announced his intention to appoint Rhoda Mae Kerr and Carl Newman as members of the National Infrastructure Advisory Council.

The President announced his intention to appoint Ellen Ochoa as a member of the National Science Board for the National Science Foundation.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council:

Walter R. Allen, Jr.;
Deborah A. Oppenheimer;
Scott Straus; and
Jeremy M. Weinstein.

The President announced his intention to designate Bridget Altenburg and Brenda S. "Sue" Fulton as members of the Board of Visitors for the U.S. Military Academy.

The President announced his intention to designate Soudarak "Sue" Hoppin as a member of the Board of Visitors to the U.S. Air Force Academy.

December 30

In the afternoon, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to Mokuleia, HI.

In the evening, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha returned to their vacation residence in Kailua, HI, where they remained overnight.

During the day, the President had an intelligence briefing.

December 31

In the morning, the President traveled to Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, HI.

In the afternoon, the President returned to his vacation residence in Kailua, HI, where he remained overnight. He received a briefing from members of his national security team on the terrorist attack at the Reina nightclub in Istanbul, Turkey.

During the day, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The White House announced that the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha will return to Washington, DC, on January 1, 2017.

January 1, 2017

In the morning, the President and his daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to Honolulu, HI, where, at the East-West Center (EWC) at the University of Hawaii, they met with new EWC President Richard R. Vuylsteke and outgoing President Charles E. Morrison. The President's sister Maya Soetoro-Ng also attended. Later, he and his daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, where President Obama's grandfather Stanley Dunham is buried. Then, they returned to their vacation residence in Kailua, HI.

In the afternoon, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to Bellows Air Force Station in Waimanalo, HI. Later, they returned to their vacation residence in Kailua.

In the evening, the President, Mrs. Obama, and their daughters Malia and Sasha traveled to Buzz's Lanikai restaurant. Later, they returned to Washington, DC, arriving the following morning.

During the day, the President had an intelligence briefing.

January 2

During the day, the President had an intelligence briefing.

January 3

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President had a telephone conversation with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey to express his condolences for the many killed and wounded in the terrorist attack at the Reina nightclub in Istanbul, Turkey, on December 21, as well as the December 17 attack against off-duty Turkish security personnel in Kayseri, Turkey; reiterate their joint resolve to defeat terrorism; discuss Turkey's ongoing efforts to facilitate a cease-

fire and a return to political negotiations between the regime and the opposition in Syria; note recent progress in the multilateral campaign against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization in Iraq and Syria; and review the situation in Cyprus, with both leaders expressing hope that upcoming diplomatic engagements will result in an agreement to reunify the island as a bizonal, bicommunal federation.

Later in the afternoon, in the Roosevelt Room, the President recorded an interview with Ilana Dayan of Israel's Channel 2 for later broadcast.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Chicago, IL, on January 10 to deliver his Farewell Address to the Nation.

January 4

In the morning, at the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center Auditorium, the President met with members of the House and Senate Democratic Caucuses, including Senate Minority Leader Charles E. Schumer, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, and Rep. Frederica S. Wilson, to discuss the future of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, VA. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

January 5

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President received a briefing from senior members of his national security team on the classified report detailing Russian and other foreign interference in the 2016 U.S. Presidential election and related cyber attacks on the Democratic Party. Then, in the Diplomatic Reception Room, he recorded separate "Live From the White House" interviews with Chicago, IL, television journalists Jay Levine of WBBM, Muriel Clair of WGN, Dawn Hasbrouck of WFLD, Carol Marin of WMAQ, and Judy Hsu of WLS, all for later broadcast.

The President announced the designation of the following individuals as members of a Presidential delegation to attend the Inauguration of Nana Dankwa Akufo-Addo as President of Ghana in Accra, Ghana, on January 7: Linda Thomas-Greenfield (head of delegation); Robert Jackson; and Karen Bass.

The President announced his intention to appoint Barbara Jenkins and Tarajean Yazzie-Mintz as members of the Board of Directors of the National Board for Education Sciences.

The President announced his intention to appoint Herbert Block, Eric D. Schwerin, and Gary P. Zola as members of the Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the National Museum and Library Services Board:

Sylvia Orozco;
Annette Evans Smith;
Deborah Taylor; and
Jonathan L. Zittrain.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council:

Tamar Newberger;
Eric Ortner;
Michael Posner; and
Menachem Rosensaft.

January 6

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Lower Cross Hall and Oval Office, the President recorded an interview with George Stephanopoulos of ABC's "This Week" program for later broadcast.

Also in the afternoon, the President received a briefing from Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa O. Monaco on the shooting at the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

During the day, the President had separate telephone conversations with Gov. Richard L. Scott of Florida and Broward County Mayor Barbara Sharief to discuss the shooting at the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International

Airport, extend his condolences to the families and other loved ones of those killed, and offer Federal assistance in the investigation.

Also during the day, the President met with former Mayor R.T. Rybak of Minneapolis, MN.

The White House announced further details on the President's travel to Chicago, IL, on January 10 to deliver his Farewell Address to the Nation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Daniel Willingham as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Board for Education Sciences.

The President announced his intention to appoint John W. Keker and Mark Pincus as members of the Board of Directors of the Presidio Trust.

The President announced his intention to appoint Waded Cruzado as a member of the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development.

The President announced his intention to appoint Louis Susman as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

The President announced his intention to appoint Joan E. Silber as a member of the Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad.

The President announced his intention to appoint Matthew L. Wiener as a member of the Council of the Administrative Conference of the United States, and upon appointment, to designate him Vice Chairman.

The President announced his intention to appoint Rosemary Joyce and James W. Willis as members of the Cultural Property Advisory Committee.

The President announced his intention to appoint Michael A. McFaul as a member of the National Security Education Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Tissa Illangasekare as a member of the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board.

January 7

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Jacksonville, FL, where he attended the wedding of White House Trip Director Marvin D. Nicholson, Jr.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

January 9

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office and other White House locations, the President recorded an interview with Steve Kroft of CBS's "60 Minutes" program for later broadcast.

In the evening, the President made revisions to his Farewell Address to the Nation, to be delivered on January 10.

January 10

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Map Room, the President met with Director of Speechwriting Cody S. Keenan and made revisions to his Farewell Address to the Nation, to be delivered in the evening. Later, in the East Room, he and Mrs. Obama participated in a farewell event and group photograph with the White House Residence staff. Then, they, their daughter Malia, and the President's sister Auma Obama traveled to Joint Base Andrews, MD. Upon arrival, in the Air Force One hangar, he and Mrs. Obama participated in a farewell event for the Presidential Airlift Group. During the event, he made brief remarks, greeted Airlift Group members, and thanked them for their service. Then, he, Mrs. Obama, their daughter Malia, and Auma Obama traveled to Chicago, IL. While en route aboard Air Force One, the President recorded an interview with Lester Holt of NBC's "Nightly News" and "Dateline NBC" programs. Later, upon arrival in Chicago, he traveled to Valois Restaurant.

In the evening, at Valois Restaurant, the President continued his interview with Lester Holt. Later, the President, his daughter Malia, and his sister Auma returned to Washington, DC, arriving the following morning.

January 11

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the Cultural Property Advisory Committee:

John E. Frank;
Lothar von Falkenhausen;
Karol Wight; and
Nancy Wilkie.

The President announced his intention to appoint Terry Boston as a member of the National Infrastructure Advisory Council.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the President's Council on Fitness, Sports, and Nutrition:

Christa Dietzen;
Benjamin Flanner;
Jayne Greenberg; and
Barbara Van Dahlen.

The President announced his intention to appoint Grant T. Harris and Andrew Weinstein as members of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

The President announced his intention to appoint Markos Kounalakis and Mark L. Pryor as members of the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board.

January 12

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, on the Navy Steps of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building, the President participated in a farewell event and group photograph with U.S. Digital Service staff members.

During the day, the President participated in a farewell event with the Uniformed Division of the U.S. Secret Service.

The White House announced that the President will welcome the 2016 World Series Champion Chicago Cubs to the White House on January 16.

The President announced his intention to appoint Joseph Cox as a member of the Board of Visitors to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

The President announced his intention to appoint Addy R. Schmitt as a member of the District of Columbia Judicial Nomination Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Charles Galbraith and Andrea Sanders as members of the Board of Trustees of the Institute of American Indian and Alaska Native Culture Arts Development.

The President announced his intention to appoint Carrie Conaway and David Francis as members of the National Board for Education Sciences.

The President announced his intention to appoint Anthony Robles and Brad Snyder as members of the President's Council on Fitness, Sports, and Nutrition.

January 13

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Old Family Dining Room, the President had lunch with authors Dave Eggers, Colson Whitehead, Zadie Smith, Barbara Kingsolver, and Junot Díaz, and New York Times Chief Book Critic Michiko Kakutani. Later, in the Oval office, he participated in an interview with Ms. Kakutani.

January 16

In the afternoon, at the Jobs Have Priority, Inc., Naylor Road family shelter, the President and Mrs. Obama participated in a service event in commemoration of Martin Luther King, Jr., Day and visited with shelter residents.

The President announced his intention to nominate Todd P. Haskell to be Ambassador to the Congo.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jason E. Kearns to be a member of the U.S. International Trade Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Adrienne Harris, Behnaz Kibria, and Jason Miller as members of the Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations.

The President announced his intention to appoint Brady Deaton as a member of the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development.

The President announced his intention to appoint Erica Schwartz as a member of the Board of Visitors to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

The President announced his intention to appoint Marjorie Margolies and Lesley Weiss as members of the Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad.

The President announced his intention to appoint Ann Marie Bledsoe Downes and Lawrence S. Roberts as members of the Board of Trustees of the Institute of American Indian and Alaska Native Cultural and Arts Development.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the National Infrastructure Advisory Council:

Cristin Dorgelo;
Christy Goldfuss;
D.J. Patil;
Amy Pope; and
Dan Utech.

The President announced his intention to appoint Janine Davidson, Avril D. Haines, and Shawn Skelly as members of the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council:

Daniel Benjamin;
Michael Bosworth;
Raffi Freedman-Gurspan;
Samuel Gordon;
Allan Holt;
Sarah Hurwitz;
Edward Lazarus;
Susan Lowenberg;
Melissa S. Rogers; and
Maureen Schulman.

January 17

In the morning, in the Situation Room, the President met with senior members of his counterterrorism and homeland security team to review ongoing security planning for the 58th Presidential Inauguration; discuss ongoing counterterrorism operations against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization in Mosul, Iraq, and around Raqqa, Syria; and express his deep appreciation for the contributions of his national security team to these efforts, as well as the contributions of the thousands of U.S. personnel deployed around the world who work every day to defend the U.S. Later, in the East Room, he participated in separate farewell events for the White House Medical Unit and General Services Administration staffs.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President welcomed Secretary of the Treasury Jacob J. Lew, Deputy Secretary Sarah Bloom Raskin, and U.S. Mint Principal Deputy Director Rhett Jeppson, who presented him with two medals, one for each term of his Presidency. Then, also in the Oval Office, he welcomed Archivist of the United States David S. Ferriero and other senior leaders from the National Archives and Records Administration to thank them for their service.

The President announced his intention to appoint Anita Fineday and Russ McDonald as members of the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children.

The President announced his intention to appoint Valerie B. Jarrett and Susan E. Rice as General Trustees on the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The President announced his intention to appoint Linda Smith as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Board for Education Sciences.

The President announced his intention to appoint Carole Johnson as a member of the National Cancer Advisory Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Suzy George as a member of the National Security Education Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Jason Collins and Carli Lloyd as Co-chairs of the President's Council on Fitness, Sports, and Nutrition.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the President's Council on Fitness, Sports, and Nutrition:

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar;
Paulette Aniskoff;
Caitlin Cahow;
Pamela Coleman;
Chase Cushman;
Gabrielle Douglas;
Debra Eschmeyer;
Tara McGuinness; and
Ibtihaj Muhammad.

The President announced his intention to appoint Robert Carrigan as a member of the President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee.

The President announced his intention to appoint Angus King as a member of the Roosevelt Campobello International Park Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Benjamin J. Rhodes as a member of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

The President announced his intention to appoint Shannon O'Neil and Daniel Restrepo as members of the Western Hemisphere Drug Policy Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board:

Kristie A. Canegallo;
Christopher Fonzone;
Maneesh Goyal;
Rudy Mehrbani;
Natalie Quillian; and
Roberto Rodriguez.

January 18

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President had an intelligence briefing.

During the day, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India to thank him for his partnership and review areas of cooperation including defense, civil nuclear energy, climate change, and enhanced people-to-people ties. He also had a telephone conversation with President Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai and Chief Executive Officer Abdullah Abdullah of Afghanistan to discuss his appreciation for the Afghanistan-U.S. partnership and commend the leaders for their commitment to the Afghan people and the National Unity Government's efforts to reduce corruption and support the rule of law.

During the day, in the Roosevelt Room, the President recorded an interview with former senior advisers H. Daniel Pfeiffer, Jonathan E. Favreau, Jon Lovett, and Thomas F. Vietor for Crooked Media's "Pod Save America" podcast for later broadcast.

January 19

In the morning, in the Oval Office, the President and Vice President Joe Biden had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Private Dining Room, the President and Vice President Biden had lunch.

During the day, the President and Mrs. Obama had a telephone conversation with Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany and her husband Joachim Sauer to express appreciation for their personal friendship and efforts to forge a deeper Germany-U.S. partnership over the last 8 years, thank Chancellor Merkel for her strong, courageous, and steady leadership, and discuss the crucial importance of maintaining a strong transatlantic bond, a rules-based international order, and the defense of values that have done so much to advance human progress around the world.

January 20

In the morning, in the State Dining Room, the President and Mrs. Obama were presented by White House Residence staff with two flags that flew over the White House, one flown on the first day of his Presidency and one flown the morning of the last day of his Presidency.

The President also left a letter for President-elect Donald J. Trump in the Resolute Desk in the Oval Office. Later, on the North Portico, the President and Mrs. Obama welcomed President-elect Trump and his wife Melania Trump to the White House. Then, in the Blue Room, they hosted a tea and coffee reception with President-elect Trump and Mrs. Trump. Also attending were Vice President Joe Biden and his wife Jill T. Biden, Vice President-elect Michael R. Pence and his wife Karen Pence, and the leaders of the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies and their spouses.

Later in the morning, at the West Front of the U.S. Capitol, the President and Mrs. Obama attended the swearing-in and Inaugural Address of President Donald J. Trump.

Appendix B—Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted July 7

John M. Huff,
of Missouri, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers for a term of 1 year (new position).

Robert P. Suglia,
of Rhode Island, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers for a term of 1 year (new position).

Kimberly J. Walker,
of Iowa, to be Inspector General, Export-Import Bank, vice Osvaldo Luis Gratacos Munet, resigned.

Lori K. Wing-Heier,
of Alaska, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Registered Agents and Brokers for a term of 2 years (new position).

Submitted July 13

Mary Ellen Barbera,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute for a term expiring September 17, 2018, vice Jonathan Lippman, term expired.

Constance Smith Barker,
of Alabama, to be a member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for a term expiring July 1, 2021 (reappointment).

Jannette Lake Dates,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for a term expiring January 31, 2022 (reappointment).

Joseph R. Donovan, Jr.,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Indonesia.

Grant T. Harris,
of California, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace for a term of 4 years, vice John A. Lancaster, term expired.

John A. Herrera,
of North Carolina, to be a member of the National Credit Union Administration Board for a term expiring April 10, 2021, vice Deborah Matz, resigned.

John D. Minton, Jr.,
of Kentucky, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute for a term expiring September 17, 2016, vice James R. Hannah.

Benjamin Osorio,
of Pennsylvania, to be a member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2022, vice Maria Rosario Jackson, term expiring.

Submitted July 14

David V. Brewer,
of Oregon, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute for a term expiring September 17, 2019 (reappointment).

C. Peter Mahurin,
of Kentucky, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority for a term expiring May 18, 2021 (reappointment).

Michael McWherter,
of Tennessee, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority for a term expiring May 18, 2021 (reappointment).

Joe H. Ritch,
of Alabama, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority for a term expiring May 18, 2021 (reappointment).

Submitted September 6

Abid Riaz Qureshi,
of Maryland, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Columbia, vice Rosemary M. Collyer, retired.

Submitted September 12

David J. Arroyo,
of New York, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for a term expiring January 31, 2022 (reappointment).

Robert G. Taub,
of New York, to be a Commissioner of the Postal Regulatory Commission for a term expiring October 14, 2022 (reappointment).

Matthew Lee Wiener,
of Virginia, to be Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the U.S. for the term of 5 years, vice Paul R. Verkuil, resigned.

Withdrawn September 12

Brodi L. Fontenot,
of Louisiana, to be Chief Financial Officer, Department of the Treasury, vice Daniel M. Tangherlini, resigned, which was sent to the Senate on February 12, 2015.

Submitted September 13

Christopher Coons,
of Delaware, to be a Representative of the United States of America to the 71st Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Ronald H. Johnson,
of Wisconsin, to be a Representative of the United States of America to the 71st Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Valerie Biden Owens,
of Delaware, to be an Alternate Representative of the United States of America to the 71st Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Cynthia Ryan,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Alternate Representative of the United States of America to the 71st Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Diane Gujarati,
of New York, to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of New York, vice John Gleeson, resigned.

Submitted September 19

Elizabeth A. Field,
of the District of Columbia, to be Inspector General, Office of Personnel Management, vice Patrick E. Mansfield, resigned.

Tina S. Kaidanow,
of Maryland, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Political-Military Affairs), vice Puneet Talwar, resigned.

Markos Kounalakis,
of California, to be member of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy for a term expiring July 1, 2017, vice Lyndon L. Olson, Jr., term expired.

Gail O'Connor Mellow,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2022, vice Albert J. Beveridge III, term expired.

Justin H. Siberell,
of Maryland, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Coordinator for Counterterrorism, with the rank and status of Ambassador at Large, vice Tina S. Kaidanow, resigned.

Claudia Slacik,
of New York, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank of the U.S. for a term expiring January 20, 2019, vice Patricia M. Loui, term expired.

Dana A. Williams,
of New York, to be a member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2022, vice John Unsworth, term expired.

Submitted September 22

Nathan Bruce Duthu,
of Vermont, to be a member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2022, vice Christopher Merrill, term expired.

John D. Minton, Jr.,
of Kentucky, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute for a term expiring September 17, 2019 (reappointment).

Tulinabo Salama Mushingi,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Senegal, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

Chase Rogers,
of Connecticut, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute for a term expiring September 17, 2018 (reappointment).

Submitted September 27

Julie Rebecca Breslow,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of 15 years, vice Rhonda Reid Winston, retired.

Deborah J. Israel,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of 15 years, vice Melvin R. Wright, retired.

Carmen Guerricagoitia McLean,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of 15 years, vice Stuart Gordon Nash, retired.

Submitted September 28

Jeffrey DeLaurentis,
of New York, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Cuba.

Jane Marie Doggett,
of Montana, to be a member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2022, vice Cathy M. Davidson, term expired.

Glenn Fine,
of Maryland, to be Inspector General, Department of Defense, vice Jon T. Rymer, resigned.

Diane Suzette Harris,
of Utah, to be a member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2022, vice Paula Barker Duffy, term expired.

Virginia Johnson,
of New York, to be a member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2020, vice Aaron Paul Dworkin, term expired.

Wilfredo Martinez,
of Florida, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute for a term expiring September 17, 2019 (reappointment).

Brent Franklin Nelsen,
of South Carolina, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for a term expiring January 31, 2022 (reappointment).

Sylvia Orozco,
of Texas, to be a member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2022, vice Paul W. Hodes, term expired.

Submitted November 15

Rainey Ransom Brandt,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, vice Lee F. Satterfield, retiring.

Submitted November 29

Joseph Bruce Hamilton,
of Texas, to be a member of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board for a term expiring October 18, 2021 (reappointment).

Seth Harris,
of New York, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors for a term of 5 years (new position).

Michael P. Leary,
of Pennsylvania, to be Inspector General, Social Security Administration, vice Patrick P. O'Carroll, Jr., resigned.

Rachel A. Meidl,
of Wisconsin, to be a member of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board for a term of 5 years, vice Mark A. Griffon, resigned.

Jeffrey R. Moreland,
of Texas, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors for a term of 5 years (reappointment).

Patrick K. Nakamura,
of Alabama, to be a member of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission for a term of 6 years expiring August 30, 2022 (reappointment).

Richard Stengel,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the Broadcasting Board of Governors for a term expiring August 13, 2017, vice Susan McCue, resigned.

Richard Stengel,
of the District of Columbia, to be Chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, vice Jeffrey Shell.

Robert P. Storch,
of the District of Columbia, to be Inspector General of the National Security Agency (new position).

Submitted December 6

Richard A. Kennedy,
of Pennsylvania, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority for a term expiring May 30, 2022 (reappointment).

Thomas J. Murphy,
of Colorado, to be Under Secretary for Benefits of the Department of Veterans Affairs, vice Allison A. Hickey, resigned.

Rebecca Emily Rapp,
of Wisconsin, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Legal Services Corporation for a term expiring July 13, 2019, vice Sharon L. Browne, resigned.

Submitted December 7

Ann Begeman,
of South Dakota, to be a member of the Surface Transportation Board for a term expiring December 31, 2020 (reappointment).

Submitted January 4

David J. Arroyo,
of New York, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for a term expiring January 31, 2022 (reappointment).

Elizabeth A. Field,
of the District of Columbia, to be Inspector General, Office of Personnel Management, vice Patrick E. McFarland, resigned.

Glenn Fine,
of Maryland, to be Inspector General, Department of Defense, vice Jon T. Rymer, resigned.

Michael P. Leary,
of Pennsylvania, to be Inspector General, Social Security Administration, vice Patrick P. O'Carroll, Jr., resigned.

Carolyn N. Lerner,
of Maryland, to be Special Counsel, Office of Special Counsel, for the term of 5 years (reappointment).

Tulinabo Salama Mushingi,
of Virginia, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Senegal, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

Brent Franklin Nelsen,
of South Carolina, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for a term expiring January 31, 2022 (reappointment).

Rebecca Emily Rapp,
of Wisconsin, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Legal Services Corporation for a term expiring July 13, 2019, vice Sharon L. Browne, resigned.

Jessica Rosenworcel,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the Federal Communications Commission for a term of 5 years from July 1, 2015 (reappointment).

Robert P. Storch,
of the District of Columbia, to be Inspector General of the National Security Agency (new position).

Submitted January 5

Mary Ellen Barbera,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute for a term expiring September 17, 2018, vice Jonathan Lippman, term expired.

David V. Brewer,
of Oregon, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute for a term expiring September 17, 2019 (reappointment).

Wilfredo Martinez,
of Florida, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute for a term expiring September 17, 2019 (reappointment).

Chase Rogers,
of Connecticut, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute for a term expiring September 17, 2018 (reappointment).

Claudia Slacik,
of New York, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank of the United States for a term expiring January 20, 2019, vice Patricia M. Loui, term expired.

Submitted January 17

Charles R. Breyer,
of California, to be a member of the U.S. Sentencing Commission for a term expiring October 31, 2021 (reappointment).

Christopher James Brummer,
of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission for a term expiring June 19, 2021, vice Mark P. Wetjen, term expired.

Todd Philip Haskell,
of Florida, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of the Congo.

Jason E. Kearns,
of Colorado, to be member of the U.S. International Trade Commission for the term expiring December 16, 2024, vice Dean A. Pinkert, term expired.

Gayle A. Nachtigal,
of Oregon, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute for a term expiring September 17, 2018 (reappointment).

Brian D. Quintenz,
of the District of Columbia, to be a Commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission for a term expiring April 13, 2020, vice Scott O'Malia, resigned.

Danny C. Reeves,
of Kentucky, to be a member of the U.S. Sentencing Commission for a term expiring October 31, 2019, vice Ricardo H. Hinojosa, term expired.

Appendix C—Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

July 1

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Text of an Office of the Director of National Intelligence news release: Summary of Information Regarding U.S. Counterterrorism Strikes Outside Areas of Active Hostilities

Text of a readout of National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice's meeting with U.N. Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura

Fact sheet: Executive Order on the United States Policy on Pre- and Post-Strike Measures To Address Civilian Casualties in U.S. Operations Involving the Use of Force and the DNI Release of Aggregate Data on Strikes Outside Areas of Active Hostilities

July 2

Statement by the Press Secretary on the terrorist attack in Dhaka, Bangladesh

July 3

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attacks in Baghdad, Iraq

July 5

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attacks in Jeddah, Qatif, and Medina, Saudi Arabia

July 6

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Transcript of a press call by senior administration officials on Afghanistan

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 3114

Text of a National Institutes of Health press release: NIH Awards $55 million To Build Million-Person Precision Medicine Study

Text of a Food and Drug Administration press release: FDA Advances Precision Medicine Initiative by Issuing Draft Guidances on Next Generation Sequencing-Based Tests

Fact sheet: Obama Administration Takes More Actions To Address the Prescription Opioid and Heroin Epidemic

Fact sheet: Administration Announces New Actions To Advance the President's Precision Medicine Initiative

July 7

Text of a Department of Education press release: Report: Increases in Spending on Corrections Far Outpace Education

July 8

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest, Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Benjamin J. Rhodes, and Acting Assistant Secretary for Defense for International Security Affairs Elissa Slotkin

Statement by National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice on the White House Summit on Global Development

Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Jason L. Furman on the employment situation in June

Fact sheet: NATO Warsaw Summit

Fact sheet: U.S. Contributions to NATO Capabilities

Fact sheet: U.S. Assurance and Deterrence Efforts in Support of NATO Allies

Fact sheet: U.S.-Poland Relations

July 9

Fact sheet: U.S. Contributions to Enhancing Allied Resilience

Fact sheet: NATO's Enduring Commitment to Afghanistan

Fact sheet: U.S. and NATO Efforts in Support of NATO Partners, Including Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova

July 10

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the death of Abdul Sattar Edhi

Fact sheet: U.S.-Spain Relations

July 11

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice on the situation in South Sudan

July 12

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

July 13

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary on Congressional passage of S. 524

July 15

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 636, H.R. 3766, H.R. 4372, H.R. 4960, and S. 2845

Fact sheet: Administration Announces an Advanced Wireless Research Initiative, Building on President's Legacy of Forward-Leaning Broadband Policy

July 18

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the U.S. Delegation for the Extraordinary Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol

July 19

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Text of press release from the U.S. Embassy in Malawi: U.S. Second Lady Announces $20 Million in Food Assistance

Text of a Department of Housing and Urban Development memorandum: Mortgage Letter 2016–11: Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE)

Text: Circular 26–16–18: Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Loan Processing (released by the Department of Veterans Affairs)

Fact sheet: Obama Administration Announces Clean Energy Savings for All Americans Initiative

July 20

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 1252

Fact sheet: President Obama's Commitment to Global Development

July 21

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice's meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development Jean-Marc Ayrault of France

July 22

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on Na-

tional Security Adviser Susan E. Rice's travel to China

Statement by the Press Secretary on the shootings in Munich, Germany

Statement from the Press Secretary on the President's decision to veto the Presidential Allowance Modernization Act of 2016

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 4875, H.R. 5588, S. 524, and S.2840

Fact sheet: United States-Mexico Relations

July 23

Statement by the Press Secretary on the terrorist attacks in Kabul, Afghanistan

July 25

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice's meetings in Beijing, China

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the knife attack in Sagamihara, Japan

July 26

Transcript of a press briefing by Principal Deputy Press Secretary Eric H. Schultz

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attacks in Mogadishu, Somalia

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attack in Saint-Étienne-du-Rouvray, France

Fact sheet: Presidential Policy Directive on United States Cyber Incident Coordination

July 27

Excerpts of the President's remarks at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia, PA

Advance text of the President's remarks at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia, PA

July 28

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

July 29

Transcript of a press briefing by Principal Deputy Press Secretary Eric H. Schultz

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 2607, H.R. 3700, H.R. 3931, H.R. 3953, H.R. 4010, H.R. 4425, H.R. 4747, H.R. 4761, H.R. 4777, H.R. 4877, H.R. 4904, H.R. 4925, H.R. 4975, H.R. 4987, H.R. 5028, H.R. 5722, S. 764, S. 2893, S. 3055, and S. 3207

Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Jason L. Furman on the first estimate of GDP for the second quarter of 2016

July 30

Transcript of a weekly address by Vice President Joe Biden and former Judge Timothy K. Lewis of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit (dated July 29; embargoed until July 30)

July 31

Fact sheet: A Record of Serving Our Veterans

August 1

Transcript of a press gaggle by Principal Deputy Press Secretary Eric H. Schultz

August 3

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama Grants Commutations

August 5

Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Jason L. Furman on the employment situation in July

August 8

Statement by the Press Secretary on the terrorist attack in Quetta, Pakistan

August 9

Statement by the Press Secretary: Impact Report: Transforming Government Services Through Technology and Innovation

August 10

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attacks in Diyarbakir and Kiziltepe, Turkey

Fact sheet: Promoting and Protecting Religious Freedom Around the Globe

August 16

Text of an Environmental Protection Agency news release: EPA and DOT Finalize Greenhouse Gas and Fuel Efficiency Standards for Heavy-Duty Trucks

Text of a Department of Energy report to Congress: Adoption of New Fuel Efficient Technologies From SuperTruck: Report to Congress (dated June 2016)

Text of a Federal Interagency Reentry Council report: A Record of Progress and a Roadmap for the Future

Text of a Department of Justice report: National Reentry Week: After Action Report

Fact sheet: Obama Administration Announces New Actions To Spur Innovation and Promote More Efficient Cars and Trucks

Fact sheet: White House Announces New Commitments to the Fair Chance Business Pledge

August 17

Text of an Office of National Drug Control Policy press release: Obama Administration Funds New Projects To Disrupt Prescription Opioid, Fentanyl and Heroin Trafficking

August 18

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attacks in Van, Elazig, and Gayda, Turkey

August 19

Statement by National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice on World Humanitarian Day

August 21

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attack in Gaziantep, Turkey

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attack near Garowe, Somalia

August 22

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama Honors Outstanding Mathematics and Science Teachers

Statement by the Press Secretary: White House Appoints 2016–2017 Class of White House Fellows

August 23

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary on Senior Adviser to the President Brian C. Deese's travel to China

August 24

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attack in Kabul, Afghanistan

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the U.N.- Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons report on Syria's use of chemical weapons

Text of a Department of Labor press release: Labor Department, FAR Council Issue Final Regulations, Guidance To Ensure Federal Contractors Better Comply With Workplace Rights, Protections: Action Implements Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces Executive Order

Fact sheet: President Obama Designates National Monument in Maine's North Woods in Honor of the Centennial of the National Park Service

August 25

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Fact sheet: Middle Class Economics: Making It Easier To Save for Retirement

August 26

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Jason L. Furman on the second estimate of GDP for the second quarter of 2016

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attacks in Turkey

Fact sheet: President Obama To Create the World's Largest Marine Protected Area

Fact sheet: White House Announces New Commitments to the Equal Pay Pledge

August 29

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest, Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Benjamin J. Rhodes, Senior Adviser to the President Brian C. Deese, and Deputy National Security Adviser for International Economics Adewale "Wally" Adeyemo

Statement by National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice on Syrian refugee admissions to the U.S.

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attack in Aden, Yemen

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the first class of Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative (YLAI) Fellows

August 30

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama Grants Commutations

Statement by National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice on the International Day for the Victims of Enforced Disappearances

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the Hague Convention on International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance

August 31

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice on the U.S. financial pledge to the Global Fund To Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice's meeting with Chinese human rights advocates

White House report: Leveraging Innovation To Boost Private Investment in America's Natural Resources

Text of a White House blog post by National Economic Council Director Jeffrey D. Zients: Helping Puerto Rico Achieve Economic Prosperity

Fact sheet: At Lake Tahoe Summit, Obama Administration Underscores the Importance of Strong Partnerships and Innovation in Tackling Our Shared Climate and Conservation Challenges

September 1

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest and Senior Adviser to the President Brian C. Deese

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's response to the final report of the Commission on Care

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the removal of chemical weapons precursors from Libya

Text of a White House blog post by White House Chief Digital Officer Jason B. Goldman: Announcing South by South Lawn: A White House Festival of Ideas, Art, and Action

Fact sheet: Obama Administration Announces New Policies To Promote Conservation and Build Resilience to Climate Change, With a Focus on Pacific Islands

September 2

Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Jason L. Furman on the employment situation in August

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the explosion in Davao City, Philippines

September 3

Fact sheet: U.S.-China Cooperation on Climate Change

September 4

Fact sheet: U.S.-China Economic Relations

September 5

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attack in Kabul, Afghanistan

Fact sheet: The 2016 G–20 Summit in Hangzhou, China

September 6

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest and Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Benjamin J. Rhodes

Fact sheet: U.S.-Laos Relations

September 7

Fact sheet: Young Southeast Asia Leaders Initiative: Summit in Luang Prabang, Laos

Fact sheet: White House Announces 2016 GreenGov Presidential Awards, New Steps To Advance Federal Sustainability

September 8

Fact sheet: U.S.-ASEAN Summit in Vientiane, Laos: Deepening Ties, Confronting Challenges, and Creating Opportunities

Fact sheet: U.S.-ASEAN Connect: Strategic Partners for Sustainable and Innovative Economic Growth

Fact sheet: U.S. Efforts To Address Trafficking in Persons and Irregular Migration in East Asia and the Pacific

September 12

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

White House report: Progress Report on Next Generation High School Commitments

Fact sheet: White House Announces New Resources at Second Annual Summit on Next Generation High Schools

September 13

Transcript of a press gaggle by Principal Deputy Press Secretary Eric H. Schultz

Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Jason L. Furman, Member Sandra E. Black, and Chief Economist Matthew A. Fiedler on the Census Bureau's release of 2015 data on income, poverty, and health insurance in the U.S.

September 14

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the Executive order entitled "Termination of Emergency With Respect to the Situation in or in Relation to Côte d'Ivoire"

Fact sheet: New Progress and Momentum in Support of President Obama's Computer Science for All Initiative

Fact sheet: Memorandum of Understanding Reached With Israel

September 15

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice's meeting with National Security Adviser Babagana Monguno of Nigeria

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice's meeting with President Filipe Jacinto Nyusi of Mozambique

Text of a National Science and Technology Council report: Social and Behavioral Sciences Team 2016 Annual Report

Text of a memorandum from Office of Science and Technology Policy Director John P. Holdren to the heads of executive departments and agencies: Implementation Guidance for Executive Order 13707: Using Behavioral Science Insights To Better Serve the American People

Fact sheet: President Obama To Continue Global Leadership in Combatting Climate Change and Protecting Our Ocean by Creating the First Marine National Monument in the Atlantic Ocean

Fact sheet: New Progress on Using Behavioral Science Insights To Better Serve the American People

September 16

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest, Gov. John R. Kasich of Ohio, and Mayor Kasim M. Reed of Atlanta, GA

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on Deputy National Security Adviser Avril D. Haines's meeting with the family of Aya Hijazi

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attack in Mohmand Agency, Pakistan

Text of an op-ed by former Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg of New York City and U.S. Chamber of Commerce President and Chief Executive Officer Thomas J. Donahue for Bloomberg View: Help American Workers. Pass TPP.

Text of an op-ed by Gov. John R. Kasich of Ohio for the Wall Street Journal: A Vote Against Trade Is a Vote Against Growth

September 19

Text of an op-ed by President Obama for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette: Self-Driving, Yes, But Also Safe

Fact sheet: Ensuring Safe and Supportive Schools for All Students

Fact sheet: Obama Administration Announces Prescription Opioid and Heroin Epidemic Awareness Week

Fact sheet: Encouraging the Safe and Responsible Deployment of Automated Vehicles

September 20

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest, Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communication Benjamin J. Rhodes, Coursera Founder Lila Ibrahim, Accenture Group Chief Executive–North America Julie Sweet, and Google.org Director Jacquelline Fuller

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa O. Monaco's meeting with Prime Minister Fayiz al-Saraj of Libya

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa O. Monaco's meeting with Presidential Military Adviser Admiral Bernard Rogel of France

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa O. Monaco's meeting President with Abd Rabuh Mansur Hadi of Yemen

Fact sheet: White House Announces Commitments to the Call to Action for Private Sector Engagement on the Global Refugee Crisis

Fact Sheet: Leaders' Summit on Refugees

September 21

Statement by the Press Secretary: CEA Report: The Economic Record of the Obama Administration—Addressing Climate Change

Text of a Council of Economic Advisers report: The Economic Record of the Obama Administration: Addressing Climate Change

Text of a National Intelligence Council report: Implications for US National Security of Anticipated Climate Change (dated August 10, 2016)

Fact sheet: U.S.-Africa Cooperation on Trade and Investment Under the Obama Administration

Fact sheet: President Obama Takes a Historic Step To Address the National Security Implications of Climate Change

September 22

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary: Leaders from 100+ Countries Call for Ambitious Amendment to the Montreal Protocol To Phase Down HFCs and Donors Announce Intent To Provide $80 Million of Support

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the peace agreement between the Government of Afghanistan and representatives of the Hizb-e Islami Gulbuddin organization

September 23

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 3969 and S. 1579

September 25

Fact sheet: The 8th Annual White House Tribal Nations Conference (embargoed until September 26)

September 26

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Fact sheet: Announcing Over $80 Million in New Federal Investment and a Doubling of Participating Communities in the White House Smart Cities Initiative

September 27

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Fact sheet: Obama Administration Announces New Efforts To Increase National Preparedness by Building Community Capacity To Recover From Disasters

September 28

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice on the death of former President Shimon Peres of Israel

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on Deputy National Security Adviser Avril D. Haines's meeting with Egyptian civil society activists

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice's telephone conversation with National Security Adviser Ajit Doval of India

Fact sheet: Data by the People, for the People—Eight Years of Progress Opening Government Data To Spur Innovation, Opportunity, & Economic Growth

Fact sheet: United States Hosts First-Ever Arctic Science Ministerial To Advance International Research Effort

Fact sheet: Launch of the "Lock Down Your Login" Public Awareness Campaign

September 29

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest and Secretary of Education John B. King, Jr.

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 5325, H.R. 2615, H.R. 5252, H.R. 5936, H.R. 5937, and H.R. 5985

Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Jason L. Furman on the third estimate of GDP for the second quarter of 2016

Text of a Council of Economic Advisers report: The Economic Record of the Obama Administration: Investing in Higher Education

Fact sheet: Providing Students and Families With Comprehensive Support and Information for College Success

Fact sheet: Helping Working Americans Get Ahead by Expanding Paid Sick Leave and Fighting for Equal Pay

September 30

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 1878

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the National Counterterrorism Center's Status Report on the Implementation of Executive Order 13698—Hostage Recovery Activities

Text of the National Counterterrorism Center's Status Report on the Implementation of Executive Order 13698—Hostage Recovery Activities

October 3

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

October 4

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Text of a readout of National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice's meeting with First Vice President Taban Deng Gai of South Sudan

Text of a memorandum from White House Rural Council Chair Thomas J. Vilsack, Office of Management and Budget Director Shaun L.S. Donovan, Domestic Policy Council Director Cecilia Muñoz, and National Economic Council Director Jeffrey D. Zients to White House Rural Council Member Agencies: Rural Strategies That Work: Lifting Up Federal Policies That Are Responsive to the Assets and Challenges of Rural America (dated October 5)

Fact sheet: The White House Rural Forum

October 5

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Fact sheet: Presidential Memorandum on Promoting Diversity and Inclusion in the National Security Workforce

October 6

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama Grants Commutations

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the U.S. Delegation for the Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol

Text of an essay by President Obama for the Economist magazine: The Way Ahead

Text of a National Economic Council report: Revitalizing American Manufacturing

Fact sheet: The Opportunity Project—Unleashing the Power of Open Data To Build Stronger Ladders of Opportunity for All Americans

Fact sheet: New Progress in a Resurgent American Manufacturing Sector

Fact sheet: 191 Countries Reach a Global Climate Deal for International Aviation

October 7

Transcript of a press gaggle by Principal Deputy Press Secretary Eric H. Schultz

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 1475, H.R. 2494, H.R. 2733, H.R. 3004, H.R. 3937, H.R. 5147, H.R. 5578, H.R. 5883, H.R. 5944, H.R. 5946, S. 1004, S. 1698, S. 2683, and S. 3283

Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Jason L. Furman on the employment situation in September

Text of a White House blog post by White House Office of Science and Technology Policy Chief of Staff Cristin A. Dorgelo and Communications Director and Senior Policy Analyst Kristin Lee: White House Frontiers: Robots, Space Exploration, and the Future of American Innovation

October 8

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on Yemen

October 9

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attacks in Turkey

October 11

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

White House report: My Brother's Keeper 2016 Progress Report

Fact sheet: Let Girls Learn—A Comprehensive Investment in Adolescent Girls Education

Fact sheet: New Commitments Announced in Support of the My Brother's Keeper Initiative at ESPN Town Hall With President Obama at North Carolina A&T State University

October 12

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attacks in Kabul and Balkh Province, Afghanistan

Fact sheet: United States Leadership To Advance the Global Health Security Agenda: 55 Countries Show Concrete Commitment To Prevent, Detect, and Respond

October 13

Transcript of a press gaggle by Principal Deputy Press Secretary Eric H. Schultz

Text of a National Science and Technology Council report: Preparing for the Future of Artificial Intelligence (released by the Committee on Technology)

Text of a National Science and Technology Council report: The National Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Strategic Plan (released by the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Subcommittee)

Text of a National Institutes of Health press release: NIH Nearly Doubles Investment in BRAIN Initiative Research

Text of a National Institutes of Health press release: NIH Funds Additional Medical Centers To Expand National Precision Medicine Research Program

Text of a Department of Transportation press release: Secretary Foxx Participates in White House Frontiers Conference, Announces Nearly $65 Million in Advanced Technology Transportation Grants

Text of a Department of Justice blog post: Growing Number of Communities Are Using Data To Improve Policing and Criminal Justice

Fact sheet: Harnessing the Possibilities of Science, Technology, and Innovation

October 14

Transcript of a press gaggle by Principal Deputy Press Secretary Eric H. Schultz

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 246

Fact sheet: Key Deliverables for the Inaugural Meeting of the North American Working Group on Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls

October 15

Fact sheet: Nearly 200 Countries Reach a Global Deal To Phase Down Potent Greenhouse Gases and Avoid up to 0.5°C of Warming

October 16

Fact sheet: President Obama Announces High School Graduation Rate Has Reached New High (embargoed until October 17)

Fact sheet: Public High School 4-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (embargoed until October 17)

October 17

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

October 18

Fact sheet: United States-Italy Cooperation

Fact sheet: Obama Administration Announces New Actions To Spur Competition in the Airline Industry, Give Consumers the Information They Need To Make Informed Choices

October 19

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice's meeting with Nigerian Governors

October 20

Transcript of a press gaggle by Principal Deputy Press Secretary Eric H. Schultz

Statement by the Press Secretary: Access to Quality, Affordable Health Care: Progress and Promise of the Affordable Care Act and Other Administration Efforts

Text of a White House blog post by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Jason L. Furman: More Than 3 Million Children Have Coverage Due To Drop in Uninsured Rate Since 2008

October 21

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Fact sheet: Investing More Than $50 Million Through ApprenticeshipUSA To Expand Proven Pathways Into the Middle Class

Fact sheet: Harnessing the Small Satellite Revolution To Promote Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Space

October 22

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations report on allegations of chemical weapons use in Syria

October 24

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Fact sheet: Building a Lasting Effort To End Modern Slavery

October 25

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attack in Quetta, Pakistan

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attacks in Mandera, Kenya, and Beledweyne, Somalia

Text of a Council of Economic Advisers issue brief: Labor Market Monopsony: Trends, Consequences, and Policy Responses

Fact sheet: The Obama Administration Announces New Steps To Spur Competition in the Labor Market and Accelerate Wage Growth

October 26

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Fact sheet: Administration Announces Additional Economic and Workforce Development Resources for Coal Communities Through POWER Initiative

October 27

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama Grants Commutations

Text: The Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Parity Task Force: Final Report

Fact sheet: Federal Parity Task Force Takes Steps To Strengthen Insurance Coverage for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders

October 28

Transcript of a press gaggle by Principal Deputy Press Secretary Eric H. Schultz

Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Jason L. Furman on the advance estimate of GDP for the third quarter of 2016

Fact sheet: Strengthening Americans' Voice in the Workplace

October 29

Transcript of a weekly address by Vice President Joe Biden (dated October 28; embargoed until October 29)

October 31

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the parliamentary elections in Georgia

Text of a Council on Climate Preparedness and Resilience report: Opportunities To Enhance the Nation's Resilience to Climate Change

Fact sheet: Obama Administration Highlights Opportunities for Building Community Climate Resilience Across the Nation

Fact sheet: Launching the Resilience Dialogues (released by the Office of Science and Technology Policy)

November 1

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice's meeting with State Councilor Yang Jiechi of China

November 2

Transcript of a press gaggle by Principal Deputy Press Secretary Eric H. Schultz

November 3

Transcript of a press gaggle by Principal Deputy Press Secretary Eric H. Schultz

Statement by the Press Secretary: Obama Administration Announces New Actions To Accelerate the Deployment of Electric Vehicles and Charging Infrastructure

November 4

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama Grants Commutations

Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Jason L. Furman on the employment situation in October

Statement by National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice on the Executive order on advancing the Global Health Security Agenda

November 7

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

November 9

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary on the outcome of the 2016 Presidential election

November 10

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Fact sheet: Facilitating a Smooth Transition to the Next Administration

Fact sheet: Ensuring Veterans Have the Tools To Succeed

November 11

Transcript of a teleconference press briefing by Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Benjamin J. Rhodes, Deputy National Security Adviser for International Economics Adewale "Wally" Adeyemo, and National Security Council Senior Director of Europe-

an Affairs Charles A. Kupchan on the President's travel to Greece, Germany, and Peru

Statement by the Press Secretary on Ukrainian Holodomor Remembrance Day

November 12

Statement by National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice on the revised Colombian peace agreement

November 13

Statement by Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa O. Monaco on the anniversary of the terrorist attacks in Paris, France

November 15

Fact sheet: U.S.-Greek Partnership

November 16

Fact sheet: Establishing a Council on Community Solutions To Align Federal Efforts With Local Priorities and Citizens' Needs

November 17

Fact sheet: United States-Germany Relations

November 18

Text of a Department of Energy report: Best Practice Guidelines for Residential PACE Financing Programs

Fact sheet: Obama Administration Announces New Actions To Bring Clean Energy Savings to All Americans

Fact sheet: The United States' Commitment to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative

November 19

Transcript of a weekly address by Vice President Joe Biden (dated November 18; embargoed until November 19)

Statement by National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice on the attacks against hospitals and first responders in Aleppo, Syria

Fact sheet: Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative (YLAI)

November 20

Fact sheet: 24th Annual APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting

November 21

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attack at the Baqir-ul-Olum Mosque in Kabul, Afghanistan

November 22

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama Grants Commutations

November 23

Statement by the Press Secretary: Background on the Pardoning of the National Thanksgiving Turkey

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the signing of the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) by South Korea and Japan

November 24

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attack in Hilla, Iraq

November 28

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 845, H.R. 4511, H.R. 5392, and H.R. 6007

November 29

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Jason L. Furman on the second estimate of GDP for the third quarter of 2016

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the crash of LaMia Airlines Flight 2933 near Medellin, Colombia

November 30

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary on H.R. 34, the 21st Century Cures Act

Text of a White House report: Making Health Care Better—Addressing Substance Use Disorders: Progress in Prevention, Treatment, Recovery, and Research

Text of the first annual report of the White House Legal Aid Interagency Roundtable: Expanding Access to Justice, Strengthening Federal Programs

Text: The National HIV/AIDS Strategy for the United States: Updated to 2020—2016 Progress Report

Text: The National HIV/AIDS Strategy for the United States: Updated to 2020—Indicator Supplement

Fact sheet: Celebrating President Obama's Top 10 Actions To Advance Entrepreneurship, and Announcing New Steps To Build on These Successes

Fact sheet: Obama Administration Marks Progress in Substance Use Disorder Prevention, Treatment, Recovery, and Research

Fact sheet: White House Announces New Commitments to the Fair Chance Business Pledge and Actions To Improve the Criminal Justice System

Fact sheet: World AIDS Day 2016

December 1

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Fact sheet: Progress and Momentum in Support of TechHire Initiative

December 2

Transcript of a press briefing by Principal Deputy Press Secretary Eric H. Shultz

Statement by the Press Secretary on the anniversary of the terrorist attack in San Bernardino, California

Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Jason L. Furman on the employment situation in November

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on elections in The Gambia

Text of a Commission on Enhancing National Cybersecurity report: Report on Securing and Growing the Digital Economy (dated December 1)

December 5

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Text of a White House report: Report on the Legal and Policy Frameworks Guiding the United States' Use of Military Force and Related National Security Operations

Text of a Department of Justice report on United States detention policy, submitted to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations on April 12, 2012

Text: Report of the Special Task Force on Interrogation and Transfer Policies (prepared in 2009)

Fact sheet: A Year of Action Supporting Computer Science for All

Fact sheet: Presidential Memorandum—"Steps for Increased Legal and Policy Transparency Concerning United States' Use of Military Force and Related National Security Operations" and Accompanying Report on Transparency in Legal and Policy Frameworks

December 6

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

December 7

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Fact sheet: The United States Commitment to the Open Government Partnership and Open Government

Fact sheet: White House Announces New Steps To Create Better, Fairer and Fewer Tests in Schools

Fact sheet: White House Announces New Commitments to the Equal Pay Pledge

December 8

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 4665, H.R. 4902, H.R. 5785, H.R. 5873, and S. 2754

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice's meeting with State Councilor Guo Shengkun of China

Fact sheet: High Level Economic Dialogue: Three Years of Achievements

December 9

Transcript of a press briefing by Principal Deputy Press Secretary Eric H. Schultz

Statement by the Press Secretary: White House Report: The Continuing Need To Rethink Discipline

Text of a White House report: The Continuing Need To Rethink Discipline

Fact sheet: White House Announces Actions To Protect Natural and Cultural Resources in Alaskan Arctic Ocean

December 10

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 2028

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the situation in The Gambia

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on Deputy National Security Adviser Avril D. Haines's call with National Security Office First Deputy Director Cho Tae-yong of South Korea

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attack in Istanbul, Turkey

December 11

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attack in Cairo, Egypt

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attack in Mogadishu, Somalia

December 12

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa O. Monaco's meetings with Deputy National Security Adviser Patrick J. McGuinness of the United Kingdom and Presidential Military Adviser Bernard Rogel of France

Text of the Joint United States-Canada Electric Grid Security and Resilience Strategy

Fact sheet: Release of the *Joint United States-Canada Electric Grid Security and Resilience Strategy*

Fact sheet: Argentina Declassification Project

December 13

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest and Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition To Counter ISIL Brett H. McGurk

Statement by the Press Secretary: Impact Report: Celebrating America's Federal Workforce

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 34

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the swearing-in of Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni of Italy and the new Italian Government

Text of a readout of the President's National Security Council meeting on the campaign to counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization

December 14

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Fact sheet: At National Summit White House Announces New Support of My Brother's Keeper

December 15

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest, Deputy Press Secretary Jennifer B. Friedman, and Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Jason L. Furman

Statement by the Press Secretary on H.R. 6297, the Iran Sanctions Extension Act

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 3471, H.R. 4419, H.R. 5111, H.R. 5509, H.R. 5995, S. 795, S. 817, S. 818, S. 1550, S. 1555, S. 1632, S. 1808, S. 1915, S. 2234, S. 2873, S. 2974, S. 3028, S. 3076, S. 3183, S. 3395, and S. 3492

Text of a White House blog post by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Jason L. Furman, Members Sandra E. Black and Jay C. Shambaugh, and Chief Economist Matthew A. Fiedler: 2017 Economic Report of the President

December 16

Statement by the Press Secretary: Report: Advancing Equity for Women and Girls of Color

Statement by the Press Secretary on the Inspectors General Empowerment Act of 2016

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 710, H.R. 875, H.R. 960, H.R. 1150, H.R. 2726, H.R. 3218, H.R. 3784, H.R. 3842, H.R. 4352, H.R. 4465, H.R. 4618, H.R. 4680, H.R. 4887, H.R. 4939, H.R. 5015, H.R. 5065, H.R. 5099, H.R. 5150, H.R. 5309, H.R. 5356, H.R. 5591, H.R. 5612, H.R. 5676, H.R. 5687, H.R. 5790, H.R. 5798, H.R. 5877, H.R. 5889, H.R. 5948, H.R. 6014, H.R. 6130, H.R. 6138, H.R. 6282, H.R. 6302, H.R. 6304, H.R. 6323, H.R. 6400, H.R. 6416, H.R. 6431, H.R. 6450, H.R. 6451, H.R. 6477, S. 8, S. 546, S. 612, S. 1635, S. 2577, S. 2854, and S. 2971

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 6452

Text of a White House Council on Women and Girls report: Advancing Equity for Women and Girls of Color: 2016 Updated Report

Text: Responsible Business Conduct—First National Action Plan for the United States of America (released by the Department of State)

Fact sheet: National Action Plan on Responsible Business Conduct

December 17

Statement by Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa O. Monaco on the liberation of Sirte, Libya, from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) terrorist organization

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attack in Kayseri, Turkey

December 19

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama Grants Commutations and Pardons

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the assassination of Russia's Ambassador to Turkey Andrei Gennadyevich Karlov

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the apparent terrorist attack in Berlin, Germany

December 20

Text of a Department of the Interior press release: Secretary Jewell Applauds President's Withdrawal of Atlantic and Arctic Ocean Areas From Future Oil and Gas Leasing

December 21

Fact sheet: Obama Administration Announces New Manufacturing USA Institute, Third Institute Awarded in Three Weeks

December 22

Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Jason L. Furman on 8 years of macroeconomic progress and the third estimate of GDP for the third quarter of 2016

December 23

Transcript of an on-the-record press call by Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Benjamin J. Rhodes, White House Coordinator for the Middle East, North Africa, and the Gulf Robert Malley, and Department of State Special Envoy for Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations Frank G. Lowenstein on the U.N. Security Council resolution on Israeli settlement activity

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 2943

December 28

Fact sheet: President Obama To Designate New National Monuments Protecting Significant Natural and Cultural Resources in Utah and Nevada (released with three maps of the designated areas)

December 29

Transcript of a press call by senior administration officials on the administration response to Russian malicious cyber activity and harassment

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on Lebanon's Cabinet formation

Fact sheet: Actions in Response to Russian Malicious Cyber Activity and Harassment

December 31

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attack in Istanbul, Turkey

January 3

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

January 4

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

January 5

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Text of the second report of the White House Task Force To Protect Students From Sexual Assault

Text of a report by the White House Task Force To Protect Students From Sexual Assault: Preventing and Addressing Campus Sexual Misconduct: A Guide for University and College Presidents, Chancellors, and Senior Administrators

Fact sheet: Final It's On Us Summit and Report of the White House Task Force To Protect Students From Sexual Assault

January 6

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed S. 3084

Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Jason L. Furman on 8 years of labor market progress and the employment situation in December 2016

January 8

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attack in Jerusalem

January 9

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama Honors Federally-Funded Early-Career Scientists

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attack in Sinai, Egypt

January 10

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Transcript of remarks by National Security Adviser Susan E. Rice at the U.S. Institute of Peace's "Passing the Baton" Conference

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on the terrorist attacks in Kabul, Afghanistan

Advance text of the President's Farewell Address to the Nation

January 11

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Fact sheet: The Prague Nuclear Agenda

January 12

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Transcript of an on-the-record press call by Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Benjamin J. Rhodes and Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh C. Johnson on the Cuba policy announcement

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on U.S. sanctions designations for the Syrian Government's use of chemical weapons

Fact sheet: The Obama Administration's Record on the Trade Enforcement: *WTO Case Announced by USTR Builds on Strong Trade Enforcement Record*

Fact sheet: President Obama Designates National Monuments Honoring Civil Rights History

January 13

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

January 14

Text of a readout of the principal-level transition exercise

January 16

Statement by National Security Council Spokesperson Edward C. "Ned" Price on Deputy National Security Adviser for Strategic Communications Benjamin J. Rhodes's travel to Cuba

January 17

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joshua R. Earnest

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama Grants Commutations and Pardons

January 19

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Obama Grants Commutations and Pardons

January 20

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 39

Appendix D—Presidential Documents Published in the *Federal Register*

This appendix lists Presidential documents released by the Office of the Press Secretary and published in the Federal Register. *The texts of the documents are printed in the* Federal Register *(F.R.) at the citations listed below. The documents are also printed in title 3 of the* Code of Federal Regulations *and in the Compilation of Presidential Documents.*

PROCLAMATIONS

Proc. No.	*Date 2016*	*Subject*	*81 F.R. Page*
9467	July 8	Honoring the Victims of the Attack in Dallas, Texas	45385
9468	July 15	Honoring the Victims of the Attack in Nice, France	47283
9469	July 18	Captive Nations Week, 2016	47685
9470	July 18	Honoring the Victims of the Attack in Baton Rouge, Louisiana	47687
9471	July 25	Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, 2016	49851
9472	July 25	National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day, 2016	49853
9473	Aug. 5	National Health Center Week, 2016	52965
9474	Aug. 19	National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week, 2016	57743
9475	Aug. 22	100th Anniversary of the National Park Service	58805
9476	Aug. 24	Establishment of the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument	59121
9477	Aug. 25	Women's Equality Day, 2016	59421
9478	Aug. 26	Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument Expansion	60227
9479	Aug. 31	National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month, 2016	61973
9480	Aug. 31	National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month, 2016	61975
9481	Aug. 31	National Preparedness Month, 2016	61977
9482	Aug. 31	National Wilderness Month, 2016	61979
9483	Sept. 1	National Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, 2016	62347
9484	Sept. 1	National Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month, 2016	62349
9485	Sept. 1	National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, 2016	62351
9486	Sept. 2	Labor Day, 2016	62601
9487	Sept. 9	National Hispanic-Serving Institutions Week, 2016	63351
9488	Sept. 9	National Days of Prayer and Remembrance, 2016	63353
9489	Sept. 9	World Suicide Prevention Day, 2016	63355
9490	Sept. 9	National Grandparents Day, 2016	63357
9491	Sept. 9	Patriot Day and National Day of Service and Remembrance, 2016	63359

PROCLAMATIONS (Continued)

Proc. No.	*Date 2016*	*Subject*	*81 F.R. Page*
9492	Sept. 14	To Modify Duty-Free Treatment Under the Generalized System of Preferences	63671
9493	Sept. 14	National Hispanic Heritage Month, 2016	64049
9494	Sept. 15	Withdrawn by the White House and executed by Proclamation 9496	N/A
9495	Sept. 15	National POW/MIA Recognition Day, 2016	64757
9496	Sept. 15	Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument	65161
9497	Sept. 16	Constitution Day and Citizenship Day, Constitution Week, 2016	65169
9498	Sept. 16	National Farm Safety and Health Week, 2016	65171
9499	Sept. 16	Prescription Opioid and Heroin Epidemic Awareness Week, 2016	65173
9500	Sept. 23	National Hunting and Fishing Day, 2016	66785
9501	Sept. 23	National Public Lands Day, 2016	66787
9502	Sept. 23	Gold Star Mother's and Family's Day, 2016	66789
9503	Sept. 26	National Voter Registration Day, 2016	67089
9504	Sept. 28	Death of Shimon Peres	68285
9505	Sept. 28	National Arts and Humanities Month, 2016	68287
9506	Sept. 29	Child Health Day, 2016	68931
9507	Sept. 30	National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, 2016	69369
9508	Sept. 30	National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, 2016	69371
9509	Sept. 30	National Disability Employment Awareness Month, 2016	69373
9510	Sept. 30	National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, 2016	69375
9511	Sept. 30	National Energy Action Month, 2016	69377
9512	Sept. 30	National Youth Justice Awareness Month, 2016	69379
9513	Sept. 30	National Community Policing Week, 2016	69383
9514	Oct. 3	National Youth Substance Use and Substance Use Disorder Prevention Month, 2016	69991
9515	Oct. 5	German-American Day, 2016	70317
9516	Oct. 6	National Manufacturing Day, 2016	70591
9517	Oct. 7	Fire Prevention Week, 2016	70909
9518	Oct. 7	National School Lunch Week, 2016	70911
9519	Oct. 7	Leif Erikson Day, 2016	70913
9520	Oct. 7	Columbus Day, 2016	70915
9521	Oct. 7	General Pulaski Memorial Day, 2016	70917
9522	Oct. 7	International Day of the Girl, 2016	70919
9523	Oct. 14	National Character Counts Week, 2016	72475
9524	Oct. 14	National Forest Products Week, 2016	72477
9525	Oct. 14	Blind Americans Equality Day, 2016	72479
9526	Oct. 18	Minority Enterprise Development Week, 2016	73013

PROCLAMATIONS (Continued)

Proc. No.	*Date 2016*	*Subject*	*81 F.R. Page*
9527	Oct. 21	National Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week, 2016	74653
9528	Oct. 21	United Nations Day, 2016	74655
9529	Oct. 27	Military Family Month, 2016	76267
9530	Oct. 27	National Adoption Month, 2016	76269
9531	Oct. 28	National College Application Month, 2016	76485
9532	Oct. 28	National Diabetes Month, 2016	76487
9533	Oct. 31	Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience Month, 2016	76833
9534	Oct. 31	National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month, 2016	76835
9535	Oct. 31	National Entrepreneurship Month, 2016	76837
9536	Oct. 31	National Family Caregivers Month, 2016	76839
9537	Oct. 31	National Native American Heritage Month, 2016	76841
9538	Nov. 8	World Freedom Day, 2016	79985
9539	Nov. 8	Veterans Day, 2016	79987
9540	Nov. 10	American Education Week, 2016	80983
9541	Nov. 10	Get Smart About Antibiotics Week, 2016	80985
9542	Nov. 10	National Apprenticeship Week, 2016	80987
9543	Nov. 14	America Recycles Day, 2016	81639
9544	Nov. 18	National Family Week, 2016	85101
9545	Nov. 18	National Child's Day, 2016	85103
9546	Nov. 23	Thanksgiving Day, 2016	86553
9547	Nov. 30	National Impaired Driving Prevention Month, 2016	87397
9548	Nov. 30	World AIDS Day, 2016	87399
9549	Dec. 1	To Modify the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States and for Other Purposes	87401
9550	Dec. 2	International Day of Persons With Disabilities, 2016	88605
9551	Dec. 6	National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, 2016	89355
9552	Dec. 9	Death of John Glenn	90663
9553	Dec. 9	Human Rights Day and Human Rights Week, 2016	90665
9554	Dec. 14	Bill of Rights Day, 2016	92497
9555	Dec. 15	To Implement the Nepal Preference Program and for Other Purposes	92499
9556	Dec. 16	Returning the Flag of the United States to Full-Staff	93787
9557	Dec. 16	Wright Brothers Day, 2016	93789

PROCLAMATIONS (Continued)

Proc. No.	*Date 2016*	*Subject*	*82 F.R. Page*
9558	Dec. 28	Establishment of the Bears Ears National Monument	1139
9559	Dec. 28	Establishment of the Gold Butte National Monument	1149
9560	Dec. 28	National Mentoring Month, 2017	1157
9561	Dec. 28	National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month, 2017	1159
9562	Dec. 28	National Stalking Awareness Month, 2017	1161
	Date 2017		
9563	Jan. 12	Boundary Enlargement of the California Coastal National Monument	6131
9564	Jan. 12	Boundary Enlargement of the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument	6145
9565	Jan. 12	Establishment of the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument	6151
9566	Jan. 12	Establishment of the Freedom Riders National Monument	6159
9567	Jan. 12	Establishment of the Reconstruction Era National Monument	6167
9568	Jan. 13	Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, 2017	7615
9569	Jan. 13	Religious Freedom Day, 2017	7617

EXECUTIVE ORDERS

E.O. No.	*Date 2016*	*Subject*	*81 F.R. Page*
13732	July 1	United States Policy on Pre- and Post-Strike Measures To Address Civilian Casualties in U.S. Operations Involving the Use of Force	44485
13733	July 22	Delegation of Certain Authorities and Assignment of Certain Functions Under the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015	49515
13734	Aug. 3	Amending Executive Order 13675 To Expand Membership on the President's Advisory Council on Doing Business in Africa	52321

EXECUTIVE ORDERS (Continued)

Proc. No.	*Date 2016*	*Subject*	*81 F.R. Page*
13735	Aug. 12	Providing an Order of Succession Within the Department of the Treasury	54709
13736	Aug. 12	Providing an Order of Succession Within the Department of Veterans Affairs	54711
13737	Aug. 12	Providing an Order of Succession Within the Environmental Protection Agency	54713
13738	Aug. 23	Amendment to Executive Order 13673	58807
13739	Sept. 14	Termination of Emergency With Respect to the Situation in or in Relation to Côte d'Ivoire	63673
13740	Sept. 16	2016 Amendments to the Manual for Courts-Martial, United States	65175
13741	Sept. 29	Amending Executive Order 13467 To Establish the Roles and Responsibilities of the National Background Investigations Bureau and Related Matters	68289
13742	Oct. 7	Termination of Emergency With Respect to the Actions and Policies of the Government of Burma	70593
13743	Oct. 13	Charitable Fundraising	71571
13744	Oct. 13	Coordinating Efforts To Prepare the Nation for Space Weather Events	71573
13745	Oct. 31	Delegation of Function to the Director of the Office of Personnel Management	76493
13746	Nov. 3	Advancing the Goals of the Power Africa Initiative To Expand Access to Electricity in Sub-Saharan Africa Through the Establishment of the President's Power Africa Working Group	78697
13747	Nov. 4	Advancing the Global Health Security Agenda To Achieve a World Safe and Secure From Infectious Disease Threats	78701
13748	Nov. 16	Establishing a Community Solutions Council	83619
13749	Nov. 29	Providing for the Appointment in the Competitive Service of Certain Employees of the Foreign Service	87391
13750	Nov. 29	Providing for the Appointment of Alumni of the Fulbright U.S. Student Program, the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program, and the Critical Language Scholarship Program to the Competitive Service	87393
13751	Dec. 5	Safeguarding the Nation From the Impacts of Invasive Species	88609
13752	Dec. 8	Relating to the Implementation of the Convention on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance	90181

EXECUTIVE ORDERS (Continued)

Proc. No.	*Date 2016*	*Subject*	*81 F.R. Page*
13753	Dec. 9	Amending the Order of Succession in the Department of Homeland Security	90667
13754	Dec. 9	Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience	90669
13755	Dec. 23	Providing an Order of Succession Within the Department of Labor	96329
13756	Dec. 27	Adjustments of Certain Rates of Pay	97099

			82 F.R. Page
13757	Dec. 28	Taking Additional Steps To Address the National Emergency With Respect to Significant Malicious Cyber-Enabled Activities	1

	Date 2017		
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